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The Nation.

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EDITORIAL

ELECTION '82: WHERE WAS THE ALTERNATIVE?

What if the Democrats, breaking with all tradition, had offered the voters a clear, progressive, humane and therefore sensible set of alternative policies in this year's midterm election? Would they have done better or worse than the semi-standoff they managed to achieve?

The question is, of course, unanswerable in real terms, but as one considers the very mixed bag of results, one cannot help wishing the American system encouraged political solutions with a higher proportion of clarity than those that emerged from the voting on November 2. The "course" Reagan urged the public to "stay" is disastrous, and the best that can be said for the slight "correction" the public made in the House elections is that it may postpone the beaching of the ship of state.

Given the failures and dangers of Reaganism, the Democrats should have done much better. But the policy bankruptcy that became so evident under Carter has left the party of "compassion," as they like to say, with half a heart and half a brain. One of the more dispiriting sights on election night was the soggy flatness of the two supposed 1984 front-runners, Kennedy and Mondale.

There was some good news. The worst kind of campaign nastiness did not succeed most of the time: a commercial showing Castro lighting a cigar with a dollar bill and thanking Senator Jim Sasser of Tennessee worked not against Sasser but against his opponent, the contemptible Robin Beard, who dreamed it up. Money did not always buy office—not in New York, for example, not in Minnesota—even if it played a grotesque role in too many contests; a Senate seat is perhaps no more for sale today than it was in the Gilded

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ILLUSIONS THAT MAKE POLICY

WHY REAGAN BELIEVES IN CIVIL DEFENSE

ROBERT SCHEER

This article is an excerpt from Robert Scheer's forthcoming book With Enough Shovels: Reagan, Bush & Nuclear War *(Random House). Other excerpts can be found in the December issue of* Playboy.

During the 1980 Presidential campaign, on a plane en route from Orlando, Florida, to Columbia, South Carolina, Ronald Reagan paused to stare out the window before telling me of some important he had learned when he RAD, the U.S. attack warning head-

RAD is an amazing place—that's out in olorado, you know, under the mountain there. They actually are tracking several thousand objects in space, meaning satellites of ours and everyone else's, even down to the point that they are tracking a glove lost by an astronaut that is still circling the earth up there. I think the thing that struck me was the irony that here, with this great technology of ours, we can do all of this yet we cannot stop any of the weapons that are coming at us. I don't think there's been a time in history when there wasn't a defense against some kind of thrust, even back in the old-fashioned days when we had coast artillery that would stop invading ships if they came."

These remarks seemed significant to me, because usually when people reflect on our advanced technology and the prospect of war, they cite the tragic failure of the otherwise impressive human intellect to have found a way to avoid fighting. "The splitting of the atom," Albert Einstein once observed, "has changed every-

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LETTERS.

THE NEED FOR WORKERS' CONTROL

Forest Hills, N.Y.

Lance Compa's "The Dangers of Workers' Control" [*The Nation*, Oct. 2] not only lacks coherence but presents ideas that are plainly wrong. The standard reasons Barry Bluestone, Mark Green and Daniel Zwerdling use to argue for workers' control—that it will save jobs threatened by plant closings and runaway shops, allow for greater union control of pension funds, provide workers more decision-making power, etc.—are hardly countered by stating that there are great risks involved. Indeed, by only detailing the risks and problems of workers' control, Compa shows that he either believes workers are incapable of decision making or does not understand this concept.

The "aggressive unionism" Compa speaks of, which led to the organizing of hundreds of thousands of industrial workers during the 1930s and early 1940s, was indeed discarded by labor leaders in the post-World War II era. In the short run, the strategy of labor-management cooperation worked. The expansion of the American economy following World War II allowed the automobile, steel and electric industries (among others) to raise wage and benefit levels consistently.

Yet, despite the rising standard of living that accompanied the expanding economy, workers lost more control of the shop floor than they gained in the organizing years. The Taft-Hartley Act not only purged Communists and fellow travelers from union offices but forbade sympathy strikes, while the incorporation of management rights and no-strike clauses into contracts curtailed the power of union shop-floor officials.

Workers' control addresses the recovery of those rights, as well as workers' involvement in, and perhaps control over, investment to rebuild America's industrial base, to modernize archaic mass transportation systems and to provide suitable housing. And it was the commitment to these social ideals through collective action that fueled the "aggressive unionism" Compa is so supportive of, and that is needed to meet the challenges labor faces in the 1980s.

The importance of a commitment to social justice on the part of the labor movement speaks to Compa's fear of "enterprise consciousness." Workers' attempts to keep plants open by investing their own and their communities' funds in these plants have often met with cool reactions from union leaders fearful of losing their status and power. Indeed, if any group can be labeled "enterprise conscious," it is those leaders who run their unions like businesses and refuse to adopt new tactics to fight the corporate offensive against working people.

If the labor movement is to survive that corporate offensive, the A.F.L.-C.I.O. leadership must organize workers not into the type of collective bargaining system that today seems capable only of providing concession contracts, but into democratic unions that will strive to change the nature of the collective bargaining system. Workers not only deserve a voice but have a right to a voice in decisions affecting prices, investment, production modes and scheduling, and work assignments, as well as wages and benefits. And as any American with a sense of history understands, rights must be fought for.

There are dangers in advancing the cause of workers' control, as there were in the organizing drives against Harvey Bennett's security forces at Ford and in the efforts to organize "Little Steel" in the 1940s. However, it would seem that the business unionism that thrived in the 1950s and 1960s has proved itself useless in the 1980s. In order for the labor movement to survive, it must be willing to accept the risks and fight for the benefits to be derived from workers' control. *Michael Musuraca*

READING WOMEN, READING MEN

Chevy Chase, Md.

Almost all my professional life has been spent in the book world, commercial and noncommercial. It hasn't prepared me for the startling assertion by Norma Klein in her review "Connecting Literature and Life," [*The Nation*, Oct. 16]: "The sad fact is that today novels written from the point of view of women (usually these novels are also written by women) are read mainly by women. Novels written from the point of view of men (usually written by men) are read by everyone." This is a fascinating fact if it is a fact. Does Klein have any objective basis for this judgment? *Theodore Wilentz*

'GETTING THE BULLET'

Burlington, Vt.

As a discerning reader I am grateful to Norma Klein for her review of Rachel M. Brownstein's *Becoming a Heroine*, as she has brought to my attention what appears to be a marvelous book.

As a male reader, however, my gratefulness ends when she asserts that most men are not convinced that choosing a mate is as intrinsically interesting as fighting a war and that, in effect, men and women alike suffer as a result of this defect. It is a historical truism that "role-modeling" and inculcating social values in the traditional nuclear family, for male and female children alike, has been largely the prerogative of mothers and school instructors (most of whom are women). As a result of the role society has forced upon them as "breadwinners," most males have but a third of the time available for their children that their wives do; so women share at least equally in the responsibility for the development of values held by the male adult.

I write this as a (soon to be) single father whose wife during the past few months not only purchased an R.O.T.C. cap for our 2-year-old son but, when given two hand-carved heirlooms by her mother, a compact case and a large hollow wooden bullet, immediately decided that our boy would be given the bullet and that the compact would be held for our 2-month-old daughter. She refused out of hand my suggestion that the boy at least be able to choose which one he wanted. Her reply? "He's not old enough to make those choices; this [the bullet] is his tradition."

Indeed, compulsory aggression and "getting the bullet" is the male heritage, and my admonition to Klein is that her stereotyping statement does nothing to change the mindset responsible. What a pity, for all of us.

William D. Clark

KLEIN REPLIES

New York City

Wilentz: My basis for the statement quoted, apart from numerous articles and reviews I have read over the years, is personal experience. To wit—many times when recommending novels about women to literary men friends, I've been told, "That sounds like a women's book." When pressed, these men admit that what they mean is that the novel, because it focuses on the lives of women, wouldn't interest them. I've never gotten that response when recommending a novel about a man to a woman. Listen, I hope I'm wrong, and that this just shows I've been keeping the wrong company. I hope fervently that there are, unbeknownst to me, droves of men out there who are gobbling up any books they can lay their hands on told from a woman's point of view, and loving them. To each and every one of them, if they exist, I raise my glass.

Clark: Certainly, we are all at the mercy of the sexual stereotypes that riddle our culture. In essence, I feel we live in a mysogynist society that encourages men to have contempt for women and women to have contempt for themselves. Anyone who rebels against this is to be commended, but I've seen a lot more conformists than iconoclasts in my day.

As for the wife who gave a bullet to her son and a compact to her daughter, a pox on her. She's a disgrace to the hallowed halls of wifedom. *Norma Klein*

CLARIFICATION

Berkeley, Calif.

I would like to make clear that my reference to Richard E. Feinberg, editor of *Central America: International Dimensions of the Crisis*, and to James R. Kurth, one of its contributors ["Books to Fill the Information Gap," *The Nation*, Oct. 23], was not intended to include them among conservative critics of the Administration's Central American policies. *Elizabeth Farnsworth*

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EDITORIALS.

Election '82

(Continued From Front Cover)

Age. The ugly operations of the right-wing NCPAC were completely ineffective. The three judges up for reconfirmation in California (see Peter Schrag, "The Attack on the Courts," *The Nation,* October 30) were all victorious by margins of about 10 points despite a strong right-wing campaign against them.

And, most hearteningly, the nuclear freeze movement did very well indeed. This popular effort to halt the manic arms race is now solidly placed on the national agenda. The real check to the President was here, and he cannot escape it. The smears applied to the freeze campaign from Reagan on down simply did not work.

There was plenty of bad news. It is sad, concretely and symbolically, that Tom Bradley just missed being elected California's governor; he would have been the first black governor in America since Reconstruction, and it would have been in the most populous state. Women candidates did not generally do well, and discounting the particular local reasons for some of their bad showing, that is discouraging and worth a substantive effort to overcome. It is depressing that so many good candidates lost, often to slick media campaigns.

The election raises a number of questions about what the American people want from their government and what they think they can do about getting it. One puzzle is why so many still cling to faith in Reagan. Could it be they are reluctant to repudiate their own repudiation of Carter in 1980 and the Democratic vacuum he helped to make? That attitude is understandable—and a crucial challenge to the Democrats—but to think that so many continue to hope for the Hollywood happy ending from Reagan (as he so often

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provided it on film) is sad. It has very little to do with serious politics, and that is the fault of the Democrats.

The party that won those additional seats in the House and six more governorships (as if governors could do anything for the economy) has—with the exceptions noted below— failed again to offer a real choice. Thus only four out of ten eligible voters thought it worthwhile to vote. The other six didn't think they could make any difference.

They can make all the difference. But the enormous task for the Democratic Party is to make them feel they have a part in the process and a stake in the system. They did not feel that in 1982. They remain dangerously alienated. To change that is the challenge of 1983, the necessity of 1984.

'82: Progressives

In our September 18 issue, Mark Green selected twenty "bellwether House races" in which relatively little-known progressive candidates stood a good chance of winning election. The table below shows the results of the nine races in which those insurgent progressives won. (These results are even more impressive when one adds in other races where better-known progressive incumbents won re-election—as for example, Barney Frank in the 4th District in Massachusetts.)

The fact that nine of twenty progressives won suggests that when candidates offered meaningful alternatives to Reaganoid Republicanism the voters paid heed. That five of the winners ran against Republican incumbents (the others ran for open seats or in new districts) is significant, given that incumbents are notoriously hard to unseat. Since 1960, in fact, about 84 percent of incumbents have remained in office—but of these twenty races the incumbents were successful in only 58 percent.

Progressives, please copy.

California
District 30: Marty Martinez, 54 percent, 60,033 votes.
John Rousselot, 46 percent, 51,058 votes.
District 6: Barbara Boxer, 52 percent, 95,592 votes.
Dennis McQuaid, 48 percent, 87,118 votes.

Indiana
District 8: Frank McCloskey, 52 percent, 99,978 votes.
Joel Deckard, 48 percent, 93,671 votes.

Michigan
District 6: Bob Carr, 52 percent, 84,526 votes.
Jim Dunn, 48 percent, 78,132 votes.

New Jersey
District 9: Robert Torricelli, 54 percent, 96,828 votes.
Harold Hollenbeck, 46 percent, 83,869 votes.

New York
District 3: Bob Mrazek, 51 percent, 90,815 votes.
John Leboutillier, 47 percent, 83,053 votes.

Ohio
District 19: Ed Feighan, 61 percent, 111,459 votes.
Richard Anter, 39 percent, 72,503 votes.

Pennsylvania
District 8: Peter Kostmayer, 51 percent, 83,145 votes.
Jim Coyne, 49 percent, 80,942 votes.

West Virginia
District 3: Bob Wise, 58 percent, 81,669 votes.
Mick Staton, 42 percent, 58,914 votes.

Just one small note. Bob Mrazek, the progressive winner in New York's 3rd District, has credited the issue of *The Nation* with Mark Green's original list as playing an important part in his victory. Glad to have been of service.

'82: The Freeze

Voters in eight out of nine states approved freeze referendums last week, and only in California was the margin of approval less than 12 percent. The residents of twenty-eight cities and counties —the most populous of which are listed below—also passed freeze proposals, and voters in Ashland, Oregon, went so far as to declare their town a nuclear-free zone. The average support for the freeze in these votes (as of figures available on November 4) was 60 percent.

If the President's men would look a bit closer at the Congressional races, they might find that the nuclear threat had something to do with those outcomes as well. The Council for a Livable World, a political action group based in Washington, D.C., targeted fifty-two House and eighteen Senate campaigns in which the freeze played an important part. The pro-freeze candidates won 66 percent of those House races and 61 percent of those in the Senate.

NUCLEAR FREEZE REFERENDUMS

	Percent		Votes	
States	YES	NO	YES	NO
Arizona	41	59	262,012	379,759
California	52.5	47.5	3,778,331	3,414,987
Massachusetts	74	26	1,221,710	437,905
Michigan	58	42	1,508,659	1,159,263
Montana	56	44	———	———
New Jersey	76	24	1,780,862	575,527
North Dakota	58	42	113,523	80,765
Oregon	61.5	38.5	572,000	357,586
Rhode Island	59	41	161,852	112,011
Cities				
Chicago	75	25	404,173	135,325
Denver	62	38	93,630	56,981
Philadelphia	75.5	24.5	231,787	75,149
Washington, D.C.	70	30	77,521	33,369
Counties				
Cook County, excluding Chicago	66	34	358,387	182,303
Dade County, including Miami	58	42	165,475	119,985
Totals	60	40	10,729,922	7,120,915

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Reign in Spain

Madrid

To stand at the center of a Socialist Party victory celebration a mere seven years after the putrefying body of Franco was actually buried, and to see the Spanish right not just defeated but humiliated, was to experience a reverberation of emotions. Emotions from the streets, where young couples mocked the detestable police and civil guard, reminding them that their days of mastery were done. Emotions from the crowds cheering the electoral defeat of the fascist parties, whose results were statistically undetectable. Emotions from the old Francoists one saw gaping in disbelief at their television screens as, city by city and region by region, Spain fell to the left.

At the victory party could be seen survivors of the civil war, of prison and exile and torture, mixing with Nicaraguans, Salvadorans and delegations from the new Socialist regimes of France and Greece. Euphoria was the dominant feeling, combined with a sense of how history has condemned the European right. The glorious dustbin seemed to be opening at the very feet of reaction. New dawns were spoken of freely.

The dawn, however, brought more than the usual hangover. It brought a confrontation with the reality that had been there all along. Felipe González, with his almost Kennedyesque good looks and his something-for-everyone program, is no socialist. He is a brilliant image politician who has appropriated the center from the control of the Church and the right.

To give him credit, González has managed, with the help of the King, whom he praises at every opportunity, to neutralize and domesticate the military. There may be and probably will be at least one more attempt at a coup, but there is almost no chance that the Old Guard could hold power for more than a few hours. Spanish fascism is clinically dead. So are all the parties that revered its memory. The old Franco functionaries, creeping back into politics through Manuel Fraga's absurdly named Popular Alliance, now will have to endure a prolonged spell on the opposition benches of a Parliament in which they do not believe.

But beyond this accomplishment González has not offered very much in the way of a socialist transformation. His slogan, which is simply *Por el cambio* (For change), promises all things to all voters, and he is rather vague about details. On the crucial issue of NATO, for instance, González will postpone a decision on Spanish membership until after a referendum at some unspecified time in the future. On the issue of removing American bases, he stresses negotiations and hints that a deal on the British presence in Gibraltar might satisfy him. In all foreign policy respects, he strongly bears the mark of the West German Social Democratic Party, which was his tutor, his patron and, at a crucial point, his banker and paymaster. A closely analogous politician is Portuguese Socialist leader Mario Soares, who was chubbily prominent as the senior foreign guest on victory night.

Domestically, Spain does not present much opportunity for welfarism or social democracy. The country is deeply in debt and very much beholden to the multinational corporations invited in by Franco as an alternative to membership in the European Common Market. The Socialist Party has appointed itself the spokesman for workers in these companies and is nothing if not assiduous in defending their interests—both the companies' and the workers'. It is thus not surprising that the Spanish stock market actually moved up on the news of a Socialist victory.

Tax reform can be expected in a country where wealth is as maldistributed as it is in Spain. So can an overhaul of the ramshackle and corrupt Civil Service, whose plague of scandals did much to sweep voters behind the brisk and clean figure of González. In effect, the new administration promises to modernize Spain, to bring it into the twentieth century (as its spokesmen keep saying) and to make up for the wasted decades of Francoism and isolation. But "socialism" was not a word for which the new leader found any room in his speech on election night.

The United States government has favored Spain with a benign-neglect policy for many years and has made little effort to cultivate the Socialist Party leadership. One prominent figure in the new Cabinet told me he had never received so much as a cocktail invitation to the American Embassy, and this is by no means an unusual testimony. Terence Todman, the ambassador who lost favor in the State Department for opposing President Carter's human rights policy, is certainly lukewarm about the change of government. He claims that the Socialist Party is not as moderate as it looks and that it retains a strong and well-organized left wing.

It will be fascinating to see if this turns out to be true. The Socialist Party was founded by a grand old Marxist named Pablo Iglesias, was a part of the Republican coalition government in the 1930s and participated in the civil war on the Republican side. After its emergence from semilegality, it set about tempering its reputation for encouraging class struggle. At a special congress in 1979, González managed to have the Marxist clauses in the party constitution excised. But perhaps a quarter to a third of the members are still principally loyal to the party as a vehicle for socialist transformation. One should also notice the 1 million voters who deserted the Communist Party for the Socialists in this election and who may make themselves felt in future policy debates.

Still, any left-right conflicts within the Socialist Party will not become serious until the first few disappointments have sunk in. And there will always be reasons, in a country haunted by the possibility of a resurgent fascist coup, to appeal for unity in the face of the enemy. The prospect for Spain, then, is one of long overdue acclimatization to Western European standards. That it should take a Socialist electoral victory to achieve this is one sign of how deeply reactionary the past epoch was. The red dawn, if ever, will be on another agenda for another election.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

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MINORITY REPORT.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

If it is true that you can tell a great deal about a country from the manner in which it honors its war dead, then the United States is in trouble.

There are, of course, always two ways of looking at any great historic event. Many people, for instance, refer quite unself-consciously to "the scars the Vietnam War left on America." Clearly, they need to have some sort of atonement for those wounds. General Westmoreland's maimed ego, for one example, requires the salve of a costly lawsuit. Vulnerable schoolchildren must be protected, by libraries, from exposure to the kinds of books that cling to the skin long after the first detonation. The political class that lied its way into Vietnam must be requited with prizes and respectful memoirs. The people of Vietnam must be punished, even now, with sanctions and penalties, for the impertinent way in which they conducted themselves. Last in the queue will be the soldiers who "gave their lives" (or simply lost them) in order that this trauma of doubt and remorse could be undergone in the first place.

Of the vast and uncountable number of people killed during the Vietnam War, something over 57,000 were American. That's a lot—nearly as many as the British or French casualties in the first days of a single battle on the Somme in 1916. It's quite right that they be commemorated. It's also quite inevitable that their memorial will be a travesty.

Walk through the Mall today and you will find, not far from the Washington Monument, a man-made depression in the ground. The grass is beginning to grow over the scars (as it is hoped it will grow over many others). As you follow the shallow incline, you come upon two sloping and converging walls. On their black surfaces are inscribed the names of the 57,000, in the order in which they fell. It's a good place for reflection—which is the last thing it is designed to encourage.

As everybody now knows, Vietnam veteran Jan Scruggs originated the idea of a monument three years ago. He hoped it would have "a kind of healing effect" on the returned soldiers who felt that their sacrifices had been underrated or worse. Scruggs's utopian plan never stood a chance.

The design competition was won, in an open contest, by Maya Ying Lin. She it was who thought of the understated, half-submerged and semivaulted effect. No sooner had this rather mediocre design been adopted than the John Wayne element saw its chance. "A black hole," said one. "A ditch," said another. Tom Wolfe, the failed architectural critic who is an adept at making reactionaries feel better about themselves, called the monument "a tribute to Jane Fonda."

His pleasing wit was matched by the subtlety of the additions proposed. We are now to have a flagpole (of course—just what the Washington Monument is already surrounded with). We are also to have a "locator" for the names (fair enough). And a statue of three battle-stained infantrymen will be erected. As a heartwarming touch, one of the three bronze figures will be black, or at any rate will represent a black American. Who says that conservatives never learn from history?

Maya Ying Lin protests that this is like "drawing a mustache" on her design. She's right, but she's also naïve. Her design could never have been satisfactory. If it had incorporated a frieze of tiger-cages, napalm shells, air strikes accidentally blowing up American troops, officers shot by their own men, peasant casualties and Lazy Dog bombs, it would never have had a prayer. If it failed to mobilize the dead in order to console rather than anger the living, it would never have had a chance either. If she had designed a sculpture of a quadriplegic soldier being given the shaft by the Veterans Administration, Tom Wolfe and company would have demanded that she put a flag on it. If the soldier had been black—two flags.

It's worth noticing that those who regard the whole war as a crime or a blunder on the part of the United States have not sought to politicize the memorial. The gravestone-like appearance of the final work is not due to the influence of Jane Fonda or anyone like her. It is due, as such things usually are, to a panel of cautious judges seeking to avoid controversy. The committee deliberated, and came up with the lowest common denominator. That was to be expected. But those who have never admitted defeat, and who wish to represent Vietnam as a "stab in the back" by the liberals, will not hesitate to conscript the men they sent to their deaths and use them for one last campaign.

As a result, the official dedication of the monument on November 13 (with the blessing of the very President who still refers to the war as "a noble cause") has done nothing to banish the arguments or still the controversy. This is as it should be. It comes two days after the anniversary of the armistice that ended World War I in 1918. As the bells were tolling for that armistice in England, Wilfred Owen's mother opened the telegram that brought the news that her son had been killed at the front. Owen, perhaps the greatest war poet of the century, did not take the view that the casualties hallowed the cause. On the contrary, he wrote that if a pro-war propagandist could see at first hand the violence he approved of:

> My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
> To children ardent for some desperate glory,
> The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est
> Pro patria mori.

COMING

Peter Marin on Vietnam Veterans

Peter Marin, the novelist and poet, writes on the real meaning of the Vietnam memorial and what the "moral seriousness" of the Vietnam veterans signifies for the rest of America.

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ARTICLES.

A REPORT FROM COLOMBIA

Can the Civilians Control the Army?

ARYEH NEIER

"We have three blank checks from the United States," Gen. Fernando Landazabal told me recently. "We fought with you in Korea—I was in Korea. We supported you in Vietnam. We have sent troops to the Sinai."

I spoke with Landazabal in his office in Bogotá a few weeks after he had been installed as Colombia's Minister of Defense. He is cashing those checks, filling them in for close to $13 million a year in direct U.S. military aid—small change by East-West standards, but exceeded in this hemisphere only by the amount Washington provides El Salvador and Honduras. The United States gives several million more a year to General Landazabal's forces to help combat the drug trade.

In the few days following my meeting with Landazabal, I spoke with several top civilian officials of the new government of President Belisario Betancur. Some spoke of their interest in obtaining economic aid from the United States, which we do not now provide; Minister of Government Rodrigo Escobar, for example, said Colombia needs assistance to build a "democratic infrastructure." But no civilian official joined Landazabal in expressing interest in military aid from the United States. Not that they explicitly opposed such aid—every time I raised the question it was evaded, a display of caution that reflects the civilian government's underlying difficulty in coping with the armed forces.

The election of Betancur, a Conservative, last May demonstrated both popular disenchantment with the Liberal Party, which had governed the country for more than two decades, and deep divisions within that party. Even before he assumed office in August, Betancur was able to force the Liberal government to make one significant change: it was his pledge to end the state of siege that had been in effect for most of the last thirty years that prompted his lame-duck predecessor, Julio César Turbay Ayala, to cancel it in June.

Ending the state of siege was a primary goal of human rights advocates in Colombia. Its most important consequence was the transfer of criminal cases against civilians involving charges of rebellion or subversion from military courts to civilian courts. Clemenceau's famous saying that military justice is to justice as military music is to music is amply illustrated in Colombia, whereas the civilian courts for the most part are given high marks.

The lifting of the state of siege did not affect charges against members of the armed forces for such crimes as assassination, kidnapping or torture of civilians. When I suggested to the new procurator general, Carlos Jimenez, that these matters also should be considered in civilian courts, he burst out laughing and said, "To dream of that is to dream of flying saucers." Even in the procurator general's office, by Colombian tradition, charges against members of the armed forces are investigated only by military deputies.

Jimenez's reaction points to the difficulties the Betancur government faces in what is widely regarded in Colombia as its sincere attempt to improve human rights. In 1981 the main human rights organization, the Comite Permanente por la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos, documented 267 murders, 97 disappearances and 451 cases of torture that it attributed to the armed forces or to paramilitary organizations it believes are connected to the armed forces. Since the end of the state of siege there has been an upsurge in human rights abuses, perhaps because the paramilitary groups are determined to demonstrate to the populace their contempt for the civilian government's human rights commitments.

The leading paramilitary organization, Muerte a Secuestradores (Death to Kidnappers), first appeared a year ago. Its choice of name capitalizes on widespread revulsion against kidnapping, a frequent crime committed both by leftist guerrillas—who have survived in the difficult Colombian terrain for many years, though they lack significant popular support—and by apolitical thugs. But M.A.S. victims are less often people actually involved in kidnappings than apparently law-abiding citizens who have run afoul of the armed forces.

M.A.S. operates throughout the country in ways familiar to anyone who knows about death squads elsewhere in Latin America, and it makes use of good intelligence sources monitoring the left. One of its practices is to send people religious cards inviting them to memorial services for themselves. Sometimes these are followed by assassinations, sometimes not.

Betancur has pledged that stopping M.A.S. is one of his top priorities. That pledge was repeated to me by the procurator general, but if the evidence in an M.A.S. case leads to the armed forces he has no plans to bypass the practice of having a military deputy oversee the investigation. Landazabal pooh-poohed the suggestion that M.A.S. might be connected to the armed forces, saying this assumption was based merely on its professionalism and that similar charges

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Aryeh Neier, a member of The Nation*'s editorial board, is also vice chairman of both the Helsinki Watch and Americas Watch committees. He traveled to Colombia in September to conduct a first-hand human rights investigation for the latter organization. A report, "Human Rights in the Two Colombias: Functioning Democracy, Militarized Society," is available from the Americas Watch Committee, 205 East 42nd Street, New York, N.Y. 10017.*

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had been made at the start even about the M-19 guerrilla group.

Minister of Justice Bernardo Gaitan pointed out to me that "the Mafia"—the term in Colombia for wealthy drug traders—is also capable of highly professional operations. He was trying to suggest a nonpolitical motive for the appearance of M.A.S., since drug traders and their families, who are able to pay large ransoms, are frequently the victims of kidnappings. Yet Gaitan did not respond when I asked how M.A.S. could acquire such good intelligence about the left if it was an apolitical group.

In the country's rural, militarized zones, the armed forces usually do not hide behind groups such as M.A.S. Oppression is more direct. In the southeastern Amazon region of Caqueta and the northeastern Andean region of Santander, among others, peasants—including children—are required to check in at the nearest military post every eight days. For many this means a four- or five-hour walk each way. They are also obliged to do construction work at military posts, often without compensation, and provide food and firewood. Peasants suspected of not disclosing the whereabouts of guerrillas or of giving them supplies are subjected to methods of terror reminiscent of those used in El Salvador and Guatemala.

As commander of the army prior to his appointment as Minister of Defense, General Landazabal was directly responsible for the army's brutal administration of the militarized zones. Why should such a man be named to this post by a President who brought an end to the state of siege and who appears intent on improving human rights? The answer is another reflection of the weakness of the civilian government. It seems that Landazabal is the best of a none too amenable lot. According to tradition, the Minister of Defense is supposed to be the top-ranking military officer, but Betancur reached down farther to pick Landazabal. The implication is that however unsavory Landazabal's past, the other officers would be even less receptive to the changes Betancur is trying to bring about.

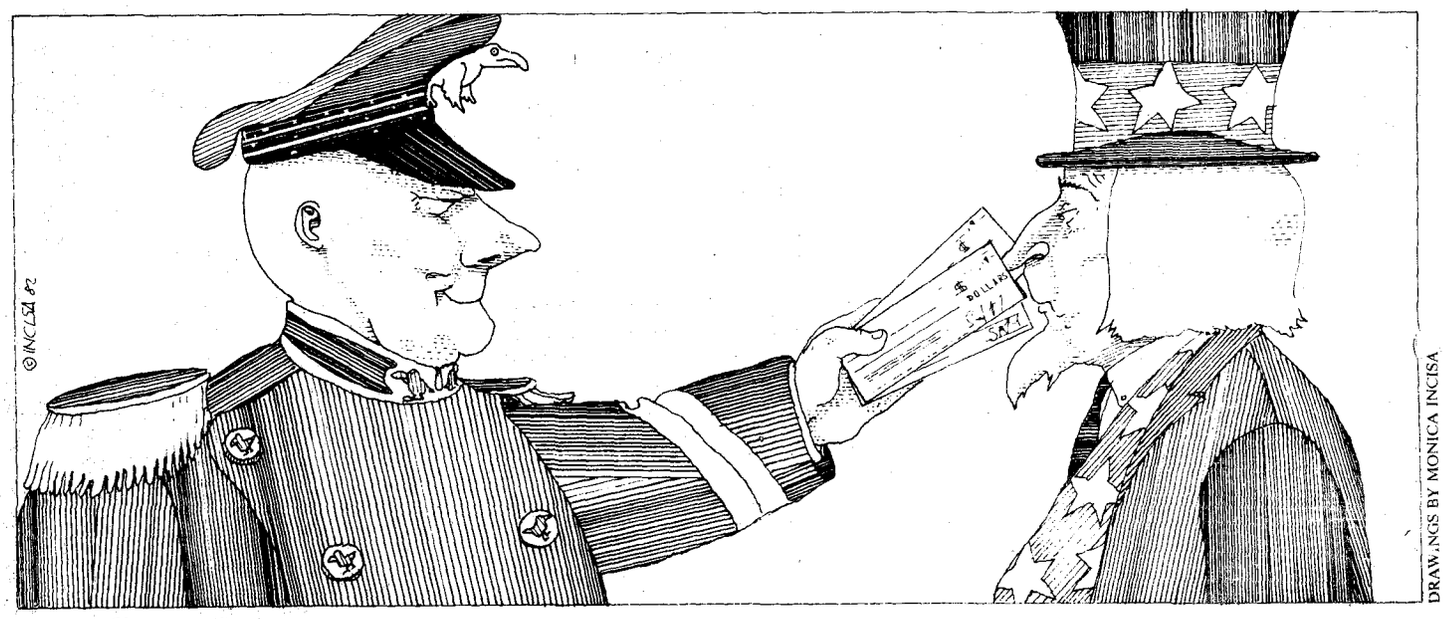
In my conversation with Landazabal, he professed support for Betancur's plan to end the practice under which police functions are carried out by the armed forces—a measure every other public official with whom I spoke also endorsed. But whether this will come about is another matter. The plan is likely to encounter at least quiet resistance from the officers corps, and Betancur may decide to conserve his political strength for other battles.

In its first couple months in office, the Betancur government has devoted itself primarily to ending the more than thirty-year war between the armed forces and the guerrillas. It has made an amnesty proposal to the guerrillas and has established a broad-based national commission to oversee negotiations and to recommend specific steps toward peace.

Though this well-intentioned effort has aroused high hopes in Colombia, it seems—at least to an outsider—doomed. Many of the guerrillas have been fighting the government all their adult lives and know nothing else; their economic opportunities as ex-guerrillas would be virtually nonexistent. To obtain the benefits of amnesty, they would have to turn in their arms and then hope that they would not be prosecuted for certain "atrocious" crimes not covered by the proposal.

Most important, whether or not they are prosecuted, they might become victims of the army's "vigilante justice" through organizations such as M.A.S. In a country where the powers of the civilian government are limited, any promises of protection would be worth little. In this respect, M.A.S. and its ilk loom as an enormous obstacle to ending the guerrilla war, although it is that war, and particularly its reliance on kidnapping, that is the rationale for the existence of M.A.S.

There is no easy way out for Colombia. Certainly, the United States has not shown itself to be part of the solution. Indeed, by issuing State Department Country Reports that gloss over human rights abuses and by directing all its support to Colombia's armed forces, it is part of the problem. □



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'AMID THE NEW DEPRESSION'

Hard Times for American Labor

DAVID BENSMAN

These are terrible times for the American labor movement. Employers are challenging unions, secure in the knowledge that their inventories will last as long as strikers can hold out. Workers read the unemployment figures, while jobless family members, neighbors and friends tell woeful stories of fruitless hunts for jobs. Union leaders watch imports flow in, learn of plants closing right and left, and wonder if corporations in their own industries can survive.

As America's industrial depression deepens, union acquiescence to management demands for concessions widens; it is a flood washing away wage gains and union principles that took forty years to establish.

In the steel industry, union resistance to employer demands has crumbled. Although the United Steelworkers of America rejected harsh terms from eight steel companies on July 30, many local unions made significant concessions in September, presaging renewed give-backs in national bargaining this fall.

At U.S. Steel's South Works in Chicago, unionists who had rejected company demands to soften work rules in July approved major give-backs in September, in a desperate effort to keep the company from canceling its plans to build a new rail mill. U.S. Steel's blackmail forced the steelworkers to abandon a sacred union principle: the distinction between craft jobs and production work. For forty years the union had fought U.S. Steel's efforts to breach the separation of craft and production work, but with 5,000 of its 6,000 members laid off, it couldn't hold out any longer. After strong prodding from the U.S.W. national leadership, the local dropped the principle. That is likely to be used by steel companies as a precedent in other mills.

Perhaps more startling was the agreement negotiated by union representatives at the Northwest Steel and Wire mill, in Sterling, Illinois. The company went after wages rather than work rules, extracting cuts of $4.35 an hour, or nearly $35 a day; with benefits included, the give-back was $6 an hour. Steelworkers also gave up holidays and agreed to a three-year pay freeze. It will be hard for the U.S.W. to refuse to give other steel companies comparable reductions in labor costs.

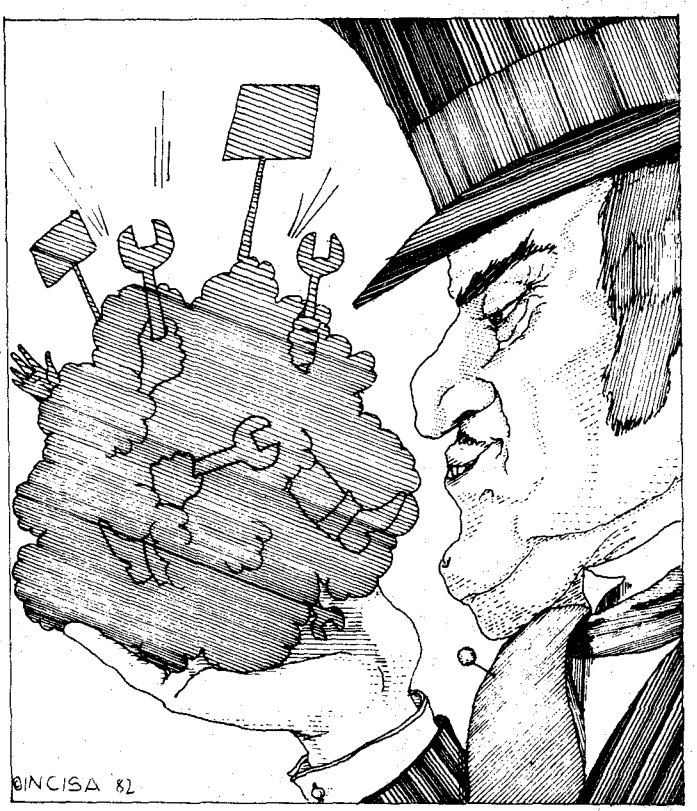
The current depression is producing more than concessions—it is playing havoc with union solidarity. The battle between the auto workers' locals at International Harvester plants in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and Springfield, Ohio, was a horrible spectacle. U.A.W. representatives were powerless to stop the two locals from competing with each other to keep their plants open. At one meeting of the leaders of Harvester locals, U.A.W. officers were asked to leave so local leaders could fight it out among themselves. When the Springfield plant won the competition, workers at Fort Wayne blamed the U.A.W. for costing them their jobs.

Caterpillar Tractor is also challenging the U.A.W. head-on. During negotiations in September, Caterpillar demanded a wage rollback, suspension of cost-of-living provisions, changes in work rules, a weakening of seniority rights and restrictions on the grievance procedure. When the U.A.W. requested an extension of the contract to allow negotiations to continue, Caterpillar refused.

The company apparently wants a strike because sales of farm equipment are meager and inventories are bulging. Some observers predict a six-month strike, and even after the winter is over unionists are likely to be in a poor bargaining position. This has got to take its toll on any union.

Finally, at Chrysler, the workers' determination to be treated fairly is tempered by their economic insecurity. The result is a standoff. Unionists first rejected the agreement their leaders presented, then voted on October 26 to reject an immediate strike and to work at least until January without a new contract.

Chrysler employees have been hard hit ever since the corporation teetered on the brink of bankruptcy in 1979, and the concessions they gave then recognized that their firm was a helpless giant in a fiercely competitive marketplace. Since then they've watched unionists at G.M. and Ford bow to concession demands. They've seen auto plants close



David Bensman teaches labor studies at Rutgers University's Graduate School of Education.

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throughout the nation. And they've heard Chrysler management boast of the "Japanese craftsmanship" of its cars.

Workers who have endured three years of hardship and fear don't want to let their bosses get away with anything, and their trust in their union leaders is badly eroded. But they don't want to strike either—not if it means their jobs.

As America's deindustrialization accelerates amid the new depression, the need for new labor strategies becomes increasingly apparent. □

NOTES OF A SPOOKWATCHER

As Ever, You Get What You Pay For

JEROME DOOLITTLE

Years ago there was a really good murder in the upstate New York town where I was a cub reporter. The newsmagazines, the wire services and the seven New York City dailies all sent reporters. But the little *Middletown Times-Herald* managed to stay out in front of these out-of-town hit-and-run artists, because we knew the territory. So when an eyewitness to the killing turned up, we got the tip.

The managing editor sent me to interview the man, an unemployed laborer with kids to feed. When he seemed reluctant to talk, I encouraged him with $25 of the paper's money. Not only did we beat the competition with his dramatic eyewitness account, we beat them again the following day with the story of how he flunked a lie detector test in Albany.

I listed the $25 on my expense account as "Bribe," but the managing editor made me change it to "Miscellaneous Expenses." I never paid for information again, on that newspaper or any of the others I worked for, even if it did seem like a good way to get very imaginative stories.

* * *

The C.I.A. man gave me a holler as I walked by his office in our Casablanca consulate. Since I knew lots of people from my job with the U.S. Information Agency, he thought I might be able to identify some faces in a pile of photos he had. They had been taken at a party the Russians had given to mark the opening of their new consulate in town. (We had all been invited, but the American ambassador didn't want us to go. He was frightened of the Russians, poor little man; maybe he thought they would infect us.)

I identified a dozen or so of the guests, but I didn't know one particular man who was in so many of the photos that the C.I.A. officer thought he must be important. "Bill," I said—that's not his real name, naturally, since Reagan might jail me for ten years under the naming-of-agents act if I used it—"Bill," I said, "all you had to do was go to the party and you could have been introduced to him." It would have been a break for the taxpayers, too, not having to pay for an extra set of prints from the society photographers every time the Communists threw a party.

* * *

A Moroccan came to my office one afternoon to ask if I had seen that month's copy of the magazine he published. It had a picture of dead Vietnamese on the cover, identified as victims of American bombing. The U.S.I.A. had sent him the picture a long time ago; it showed civilian victims of a Vietcong rocket attack.

"In Arabic we have a saying," this poisonous little toad told me. "'A man can bite, or a man can kiss.'" Now that he had shown America his teeth, he was ready to kiss her. He would print anything we wanted in his magazine. We could even plant somebody in his office, if we liked, to watch over our interests.

I told him he would just have to keep on biting, since the U.S.I.A. didn't have funds for that kind of thing. "Well, there are some Americans in your embassy who do," he said, and he was right. The C.I.A. pays to place garbage in rags like his. Of course I didn't say that, because I was a diplomat, then.

* * *

One day I went out to the labor office in Khouribga, a Moroccan mining town, with our labor attaché, Jim Mattson. (I can reveal his name because he was a State Department officer, not an intelligence op.) He was the only one of us in the consulate who spoke Arabic.

Afterward he told me what he had asked the labor officials: Did a man fill out a card when he registered for work? Where do you put the card then? Do you mind if I look? Where do you put his card after you find him a job? How long does the card stay in that file before you throw it out? How many are still in the file? And so on . . .

By the end he had learned plenty of things about the labor situation in Morocco's biggest phosphate mining center. One of them was that the office provided jobs and benefits for practically nobody except the functionaries who worked there. Over the months and years, Jim had gotten to know more about Morocco than any of us, and that's the way he did it. He just walked in and asked polite questions.

* * *

In my first week as the press attaché at our embassy in Laos, the C.I.A. station chief briefed me on what he thought I should know about his operation. (I won't reveal his name, either, although it was on his parking bay in the embassy lot. The signs went like this: "Ambassador," "Deputy Chief of Mission," "USAID Director," "Mr. D——.") D—— told me about many secret things, and I learned more elsewhere as time went on. I never leaked them, but every one of them got out somehow and appeared in the papers sooner or later. It didn't make any difference, though. We kept on doing them anyway, because Nixon and Kissinger felt they were things we ought to be doing. They kept on not working, too, and now Laos is a colony of Vietnam.

* * *

Jerome Doolittle is the author of The Bombing Officer *(E.P. Dutton).*

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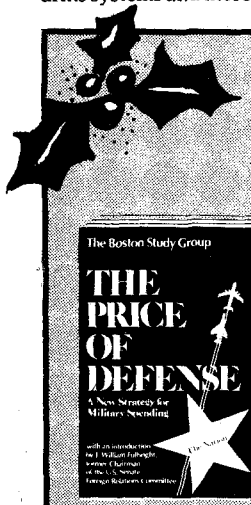

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Reagan has fired William Kennedy, his U.S. Attorney in San Diego, for telling the newspapers that the Justice Department was blocking the indictment of a car thief named Miguel Nassar Haro. Nassar used to sunlight as chief of Mexico's Directorate of Federal Security. He moonlighted not only as the head of a ring that stole cars in the United States for sale in Mexico but as a C.I.A. source on the rebels in El Salvador and Guatemala.

The incident raises disturbing moral and legal questions, unless you are as hard to disturb as the President and his Attorney General. It also raises two questions that are neither moral nor legal but just common-sensical.

This: if Reagan/Haig/Casey/Weinberger had known everything there was to know about the rebels in Central America—not just what a Mexican car thief could tell them, but absolutely *everything*—what would they have done about it? Anything different?

And this: if you pay a car thief to steal you a Chrysler, he will steal you a Chrysler; if you let him know you're interested in Sandinist support of the Salvadoran rebels, what will turn up in your driveway? □

LESSONS FROM THE PAST

The Risks of Warfare in Space

JACK MANNO

Recently our military leaders have revived the old and dangerously foolish notion that future wars will be fought in space. The President has formed a White House Space Committee under the National Security Council and, shortly after the fourth Columbia shuttle flight, issued a directive placing new emphasis on national security missions in space. The Air Force has organized a Space Command Center, has lobbied Congress to change its name to the Aerospace Force and is developing a new generation of antisatellite weapons to be deployed in space by 1987. Retired Gen. Daniel O. Graham, chief of defense intelligence under Nixon and Ford and a Reagan campaign adviser, has written a Heritage Foundation report calling for an item-by-item rerun of the space bombers and orbiting antiballistic missiles first proposed back in the cold war 1950s. And the Defense Department has announced plans for a sharp increase in its military space budget of 10 percent a year over inflation, to about $14 billion a year by fiscal 1988.

For more than thirty years the military has, with spurts and lulls, been building up the research it needs to develop space as, in its words, "the high ground," the ultimate strategic position above a vulnerable world. As part of that work it carried out Project Argus in the late 1950s and Project Fishbowl in the early 1960s, attempts to investigate how a nuclear explosion in space would affect radiation levels, military hardware, radar systems and radio communications. Little is made of those projects today, but since they involved the last permissible overground nuclear tests to date and gave certain clues as to the risks of space warfare, it is worthwhile to take a close look at them.

Project Argus had its origins in 1958, stemming from speculation by nuclear scientists at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. They theorized that if a nuclear bomb exploded in space, the earth's magnetic field would cause the fission products to follow lines of magnetic force and rapidly form a belt of high-energy atomic particles around the globe. The radiation in this belt would be intense enough to damage electronic equipment in space thousands of miles from the explosion. And at the point in the opposite hemisphere from the explosion where the magnetic field curves down toward the earth, the radiation would pour down into the atmosphere, simulating a magnetic storm with ionospheric intensification leading to radio blackouts and radar reflection. Since the paths the radiation would travel would be predictable, these results could in effect be aimed. A bomb exploded at the right place above the Indian Ocean, for example, could blanket Moscow with an artificial aurora and disrupt communications and early-warning radar.

Since no nuclear device had ever been exploded in space, these theories had not been tested. Thus came Project Argus, a test of nuclear weapons 200 miles above the South Atlantic, off the northeast coast of Brazil.

On August 27, 1958, a nuclear-tipped solid-fuel rocket was launched from the deck of the U.S.S. Norden Sound. People in Brazil, who knew nothing of the test, heard a series of loud explosions in the sky. The initial flash of the low-yield explosion (about 1 kiloton) was followed by the wispy luminescence of an artificial aurora. Four thousand miles to the north, near the Azores, another aurora was seen. A belt of radiation encircled the earth, its location and intensity recorded by Explorer 4, the U.S. satellite launched prior to the test, ostensibly as part of an International Geophysical Year research project. The test was repeated twice in the following days.

In the succeeding months, as the results of the tests were analyzed, plans evolved to repeat the feat with weapons of greater power (in the megaton range) farther out in space. Secretary of Defense Neil McElroy, in a secret memorandum to President Eisenhower, proposed a series of nuclear explosions in space in August 1959 but suggested the tests should not be attempted until the political atmosphere was more suitable.

The Soviet Union resumed atmospheric nuclear tests in late 1961, making it politically possible for the United States to do the same. President Kennedy, announcing his decision to resume testing, offered the justification that "we cannot be certain how much of our defense preparations will turn out to be useless—blacked out by the complex effects of nuclear explosions."

Jack Manno, a peace activist and writer in Syracuse, is currently working on a book about the history of the military space program.

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Among the tests the Atomic Energy Commission proposed then were two in space, one of a large-yield weapon 500 miles out near the earth's natural radiation belt, the Van Allen Belt. Scientists around the world reacted to the proposal with anger and horror. Such an explosion might temporarily burst a hole in the earth's magnetic field, some said, causing Van Allen Belt radiation to cascade into the atmosphere and creating permanent disruption in the belt. No one at that time knew, as we now know, that the Van Allen Belt shields the earth from cosmic rays, which, if unblocked, can have disastrous mutational effects on gene structures. The distinguished British astronomer Sir Bernard Lovell argued that the test could deal "a sledgehammer blow" to the earth's environment. "The proposals to make nuclear explosions in space," he said, "arise from a small group of military scientists unknown and unidentified to the world at large who have persuaded their masters to make a series of huge gambles under the guise of defensive necessities." Other scientists, including two former presidents of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, urged the tests be postponed indefinitely on the grounds that the explosions might destroy part of the Van Allen Belt or intensify the earth's radiation belt for as long as 100 years.

Kennedy tried to reassure a worried public. At a news conference he said, "I know there's been a disturbance about the Van Allen Belt, but Van Allen says it's not going to affect the belt—and it's his."

The first launch of the series, known as Project Fishbowl, was set for June 2, 1962. Bad weather delayed it until June 4. The Thor rocket lifted off from Johnston Island in the South Pacific 900 miles southwest of Hawaii. The rocket and its bomb were aborted two minutes prior to explosion, and fragments of the bomb fell back into the Pacific. The Fishbowl launch pad was readied for a second attempt. On June 20 the tracking system failed and the bomb was again destroyed in flight, debris raining on the island. Those two failures threatened to take the test series past the date set for completion by Kennedy.

On July 9 Hawaiians once again gathered on the beaches for the scheduled show in the sky. At 11 P.M. the stars were washed out by a bright pink light that gradually deepened and darkened until the sky was tomato red, blood red. Daggers of yellow and green light stabbed through the breaks in the clouds. The crowd on the beach gasped and cheered and shuddered.

They, at least, knew to expect dramatic visual effects. In Samoa, 2,000 miles from the blast, people ran from their villages in terror as the sky performed a nightmare of rainbow colors for fifteen minutes. A reporter in Pago-Pago heard a fleeing man shout, "Crazy white man!"

This was not the big bomb, the 500-mile one. This went up only 250 miles and exploded with a force of one and a half megatons. Even so, it did not act the way its programmers had expected. The earth's magnetic field was too weak to contain the high-energy atomic particles that shot out into space and poured down toward the atmosphere. A new radiation belt was formed, with peak intensities 100 times greater than those in the Van Allen Belt.

By July 12, the joint American-British research satellite

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Ariel I was crippled by X-ray damage from the intensified radiation belt. Two secret U.S. Air Force spy satellites were similarly damaged.

By mid-August, with the destruction of these three satellites and with radio telescopes around the world still crackling with the noise of the July 9 explosion, it was evident that the earth's environment had been altered. Van Allen predicted that the new radiation belt might last for ten years. The repercussions to the biosphere were unknown and are still unknowable.

The 500-mile test was canceled. The Fishbowl test reaffirmed that the physics of high-altitude explosions would make military space systems extremely vulnerable.

With the signing of the test-ban treaty the following year the United States abandoned its plans for additional tests in space. The lesson was apparently learned, and little more was heard about space weaponry for most of the next twenty years.

But now the planners are back, and space warriors are once again touting their wares. What new radiation belts, what new threats to the environment, do they have in store for us this time? □

PARTY POLITICS VS. DIRECT ACTION

The Gay Movement Ten Years Later

DENNIS ALTMAN

Ten years ago Jim Owles, one of the founders of New York City's Gay Activists Alliance, was arrested several times for taking part in demonstrations against antigay politicians. On September 29, dressed in a dark suit, Jim Owles sat at the entrance to the Grand Ballroom of the Waldorf-Astoria checking off the names of guests arriving at a $150-a-plate dinner organized by the gay Human Rights Campaign Fund and featuring former Vice President Walter Mondale.

Encapsulated in this scene is the story of what has happened to the gay movement as it grew from its origins in the radical surge of the late 1960s to become the large and respectable gay civil rights alliance of the 1980s. The gay liberation fronts that emerged across the country in 1969 after the riots at the Stonewall bar in Greenwich Village were not the first homosexual organizations in America, but they represented a shift to a more open and confrontational style of politics than had characterized groups like the Mattachine Society or Daughters of Bilitis. The movement today combines this openness with a new political professionalism, which has led some mainstream politicians and media to recognize gays as an important pressure group.

Dennis Altman is the author of the recently published The Homosexualization of America: The Americanization of the Homosexual *(St. Martin's).*

Mondale's appearance at the dinner was an acknowledgment by a politician heretofore not notably sympathetic to gay issues that anyone serious about the Democratic Presidential nomination needs to recognize the existence of the gay movement. This lesson was learned several years ago by Ted Kennedy and Jerry Brown. Much of Brown's support comes from the large gay Democratic clubs in California, and both he and Alan Cranston have benefited considerably from gay fund-raising. A number of big city mayors—in Washington, D.C., San Francisco, Houston, Chicago, Boston, Minneapolis, Atlanta—have paid homage to their gay constituencies.

Like all social movements, the gay movement consists of many factions, often seemingly at odds with one another. There is tension between gay women and gay men—the guests at the Waldorf dinner were overwhelmingly male, though many gay organizations, most noticeably the National Gay Task Force, require gender parity on their governing boards. There is tension between those who seek to legitimize the movement by stressing its respectability and those who argue that it must confront the fear of sex that underlies homophobia, even at the risk of alienating supporters with discussions of such topics as public sex, sadomasochism and "man-boy love." There is tension between those who stress pressure-group politics, putting energy and resources into lobbying and support for sympathetic politicians, and those who stress direct action and street demonstrations, working to create a mass movement.

The move into the electoral arena is not new—polling candidates on their views on gay rights was first done in 1952 in Los Angeles. What is new is the rise to leadership in the gay movement of people who are directly involved in the Democratic Party and who define gay politics increasingly in terms of electoral success. Less attention has been paid to the Republican Party, though some money has gone to Republican candidates and there has been a recent growth of a gay presence in the California and Texas G.O.P. organizations. (Indeed, if American conservatives could shake off their fundamentalist morality, they would find considerable gay support. The man who stood behind me as I went into the Waldorf, for example, confided, "I hate liberals. I'm here for the community.") At the moment there are four openly gay elected officials—two state legislators in Minnesota, a city supervisor in San Francisco and the mayor of a small town in Missouri—and there are a number of openly gay appointees, including three California judges.

There is no doubt that some goals of the movement can be won through legislative pressure. A Federal gay rights act would be important, and so far at least sixty members of Congress have agreed to co-sponsor such a bill, partly because of lobbying by Representative Phil Burton of California. In such areas as law enforcement, employment and immigration, legislative action is essential and lobbying (at the Federal level by the Gay Rights National Lobby) very important.

But there are many concerns that cannot easily be dealt with through the conventional political process. The central

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problem faced by homosexuals is the considerable social stigma that leads most people, even today, to consider homosexuality sinful, sick, immoral, immature or any combination of these. More troubling still, these views are shared by most homosexuals, both women and men; the majority of homosexuals in America, even in the large cities, remain closeted and unsure of their own worth.

There are clear parallels here to the situation once faced by blacks, who for more than a century debated the best way to confront racism. Only a dogmatist would dispute the gains brought about by civil rights legislation and court rulings in the 1950s and 1960s. But that legislation followed a long series of campaigns that raised broad questions about racism and in so doing led blacks to discover a new sense of self-respect.

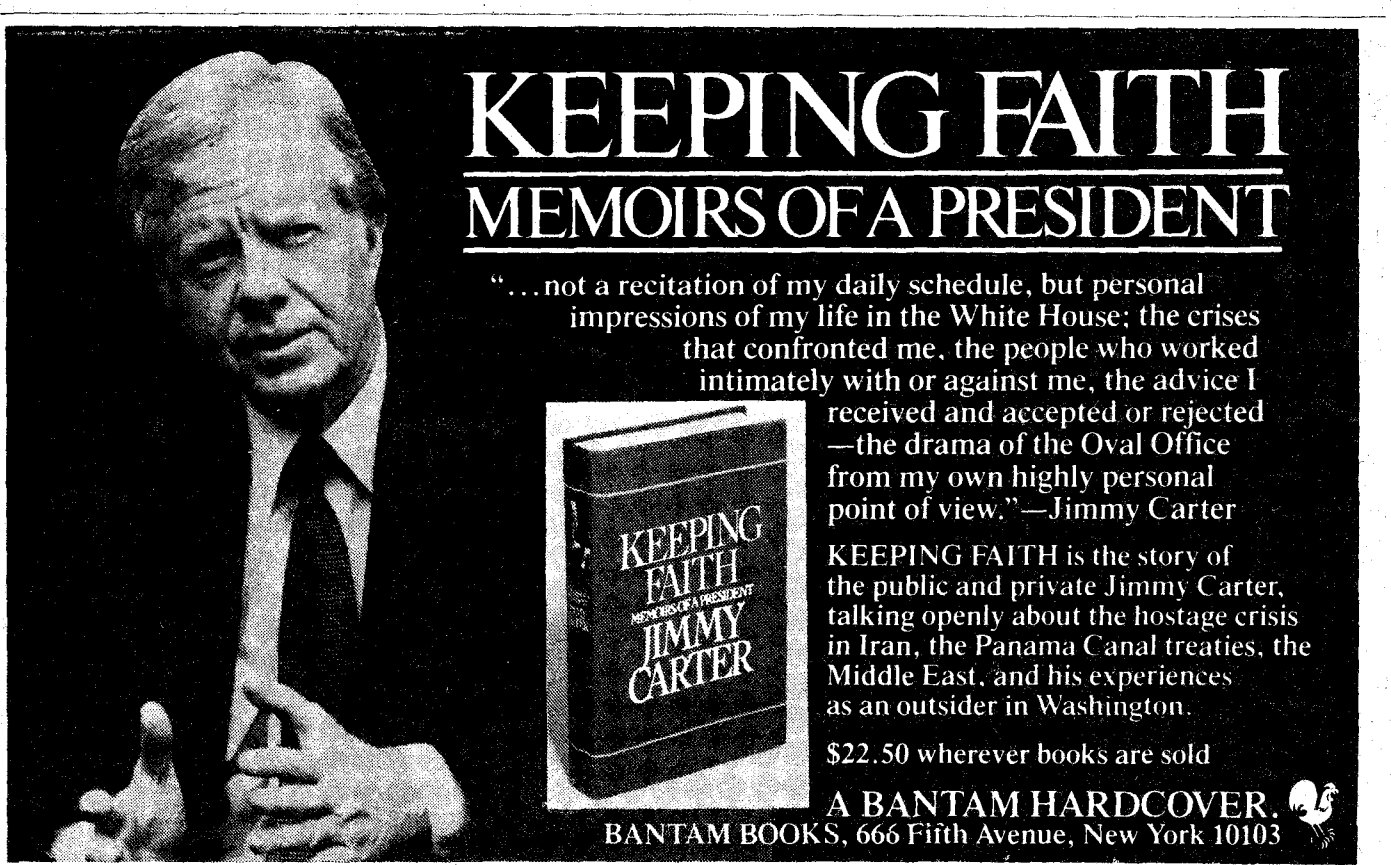
Or consider a more current example. Let us suppose that all the women millionaires in the country had joined together to form a political action committee aimed solely at passing the Equal Rights Amendment. Suppose further that they had persuaded those women not part of their club to refrain from demonstrating, picketing or doing anything that might prevent the millionaires from quietly exerting influence through money and lobbying. I have little doubt, state legislators being ultimately corruptible, that these women would have succeeded and the E.R.A. would be law. But if this had been achieved without a massive politicization of women, would it have been worth it?

This, of course, is an extreme example, but it reminds us that for social movements the *process* is often as important as the *goal*. There is the danger that as the gay movement increasingly emphasizes electoral fund-raising and endorsements of sympathetic politicians, it will forget this. In the transition from a movement for liberation to a pressure group for civil rights, might the gay movement lose its soul?

One prominent gay leader told me she was asked by the organizers of a conference she was keynoting to wear a dress. Before Stonewall, too, gay leaders stressed the need to present a "respectable" image to the world. But in so doing, gays run a risk of misrepresenting themselves in ways that are as severe as the stereotypes of fags and dykes.

Increasingly the movement is presenting homosexuals as largely male, white, middle class and enthusiastic consumers. This is the message used by the *Advocate*, the largest gay publication in the world—its circulation is now close to 100,000—to attract advertising. While successful in Hollywood and on Madison Avenue, the projection of this image overlooks the majority of homosexuals, who do not fit those categories, who may be women, parents, disabled, old, unemployed, nonwhite. Moreover, it feeds the paranoia of those who attack homosexuals as rich and privileged, like the Jews of popular anti-Semitism.

In a political system such as the American, with its lack of disciplined parties and ideological debate, there is a persuasive case to be made for the sort of politics represented by the Waldorf dinner. As the pitch for the Human Rights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Campaign Fund puts it, if you were a member of Congress, "wouldn't you be more likely to vote against the Family Protection Act if you knew you could count on financial support from people committed to fairness and privacy for gay people?"

But that use of "privacy" symbolizes the problem. The arguments for antidiscrimination legislation are in fact predicated on precisely the opposite, namely the right to be open about one's sexuality without risking retribution. The gay movement has always maintained that its job is to enable all homosexuals to come out, not only because this is a way of confronting homophobia but because it is essential to gays' sense of self-worth. There is something deeply disappointing in the movement's new rhetoric, which downplays assertiveness and participation in favor of anonymous fund-raising and voting for straight candidates.

Until now the most important gay political leader has probably been Harvey Milk, the San Francisco supervisor who was shot and killed in 1978. Milk insisted on the need for gays to be activists, both inside and outside the conventional political process, and it is no accident that San Francisco is the nation's center of gay activism today. That strategy can be seen in Los Angeles, too, where the gay community that established the first gay political action organization, the Municipal Elections Committee of Los Angeles, also supports the largest and most inclusive lesbian and gay community center in America.

Mondale's speech at the Waldorf gained him a standing ovation, although in the nine-page text he devoted less than a page to gay issues—and never used the term. (He did mention "sexual orientation," but only in quoting the Democratic Party platform. His own way of referring to the issue was to mention "some of the people in this room.") In the *Nightline* program broadcast that night, none of the politicians listed as co-sponsors of the evening were apparently prepared to appear alongside the gay leaders on the show.

One wonders just who is co-opting whom. The gay movement, like other social movements, must remember that the price of working with politicians is eternal suspicion. □

Civil Defense

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

thing save our mode of thinking and thus we drift toward unparalleled catastrophe."

But here was candidate Reagan yearning not for a way to end war but for a means of pursuing it as in the prenuclear age. What his statement reflected was a longing for the ultimate anti-ballistic missile. This wistful desire for the relative simplicity of the past and a belief in the capacity of industrial technology to solve any problem characterize Reagan's philosophy in general.

But in his advocacy of civil defense against nuclear war, these illusions, as I was to discover, reached the point of greatest detachment from reality. Perhaps because he wanted so much to believe that his get-tough stance toward the Russians really did lessen the risks of global death and destruction, Reagan had come to believe what his advisers had told him: that civil defense can change the deadly implications of the nuclear equation.

This emerged when I asked Reagan, after he complained about our inability to stop incoming Soviet missiles, whether he believed that the Russians "have a defense against our attacking them." The future President replied: "Yes, they have gone very largely into a great civil defense program, providing shelters, some of their industry is underground, and all of it hardened to the point of being able to withstand a nuclear blast."

This last assertion may be only another example of Reagan's well-known habit of extrapolating from the anecdotal briefings on which he thrives. No expert I can find believes that all of Soviet industry is hardened to the point that it can withstand a nuclear blast. Even such enthusiasts as T. K. Jones, Richard Pipes, Laurence Beilenson and Leon Gouré, author of *War Survival in Soviet Strategy*, go no further than to say that some portion of Soviet industry has been protected, and only against the indirect effects of a bomb. The September 1978 C.I.A. study of the Soviet civil defense program—the only complete C.I.A. study of the subject—could find virtually no evidence that the Russians had hardened their industry. According to this study, "There is little evidence of hardening of economic installations."

But such details do not deter the President and should not deter us here, for the point is less whether civil defense works than that Reagan, as he made clear in that interview with me, believes that it works, that a nation sufficiently well prepared can survive and win a nuclear war. He also indicated in our interview that the effective use of civil defense by the Russians wipes out the deterrent effect of our massive nuclear arsenal—the Mutual Assured Destruction policy that Robert McNamara pronounced in the early 1960s when he was Secretary of Defense.

Perhaps most serious of all, Reagan believes that we should emulate what he considers the more realistic Soviet view of nuclear war. This becomes clear from the portion of our interview that I offer below, in the rambling form in which it occurred. I use this unedited version not to emphasize Reagan's incoherence, for I have learned after interviews with far too many public figures that not all intelligent and well-informed people are verbally articulate. I have used the verbatim transcript given to me by a professional typist, without any editing for clarity, because I am not sure exactly what it is that Reagan was saying.

I had asked Reagan if the United States should seek to develop a civil defense program that could protect us from incoming missiles, and he replied: "I think we're going to have to start a civil defense program. I think—see, they violated and we kept to the promise that McNamara, in the original getting together and what resulted in our doing away with our antiballistic missile system, at a time when we were ahead of them in technology on that. The idea was the Mutual Assured Destruction plan—MAD, the MAD policy, it was called—and what this policy said was that if neither country defended its citizenry, then neither country could

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afford to push the button, because they would know that in an exchange of weapons, both countries' populations would be decimated.

"And they didn't hold to that—and for several years this was a failure of the interpretation of our intelligence, the analysis of the intelligence material we were getting. We paid no attention to the fact that the Soviet Union had put a high-ranking general, who was on the Politburo, in a high command, in charge of civil defense. And they had come to the conclusion that there could be a nuclear war and it could be winnable—by them. And so, in addition to their great military buildup, they have practiced this, they have practiced evacuation, when we finally began to learn the facts, we learned that in one summer alone, they took over 20 million young people out of the cities into the country to give them training in just living off the countryside."

It is unknown where Reagan learned this; the C.I.A. says there is no evidence the Russians have ever practiced evacuating their cities. Reagan's reference to the "failure of the interpretation of our intelligence" is presumably an endorsement of the critique of the C.I.A. by Team B, a group of hawkish outsiders which George Bush had set up to criticize the C.I.A. professionals when he was director of the agency during the Ford Presidency. However, even after the Team B report, the C.I.A., as we shall see, continued to deemphasize the importance of Soviet civil defense in the strategic balance. Yet, no matter what the C.I.A. thought, it was safe to assume in view of what Reagan had said in this interview that he would revive the country's dormant civil defense program.

The Reagan Administration eventually presented a program to Congress in the spring of 1982 calling for $4.3 billion for civil defense over a seven-year period. The program's sponsors claimed that it would save 80 percent of the American population in an all-out nuclear war with the Soviet Union. From the outset the program encountered incredulous opposition. For example, California Department of Health Services director Beverlee A. Myers told a public hearing it would be "unethical" to participate in a plan that "creates the . . . illusion that the public health community can offer any assurance of health protection to the cities of California in the event of a malevolent detonation of nuclear warheads." She added that "to plan for a hoax is a disservice to the people of California." New York City's City Council voted to reject the Reagan Administration's crisis relocation plan and New York Mayor Ed Koch stated that it would be "impossible to evacuate [New York City] in any timely, acceptable way." Hundreds of local governments throughout the nation also refused to cooperate with the new Federally sponsored civil defense program even before it was funded.

The New York Times on April 3 responded with a devastating editorial that went beyond scorn for civil defense to challenge the assumption of nuclear-war-fighting inherent in the Administration's proposal. "The sponsors of this project," *The Times* said, "contend that the Soviet Union has an elaborate evacuation and shelter program that needs to be matched. In a crisis, they argue, the Kremlin could reinforce a nuclear ultimatum by suddenly evacuating its people and leaving Americans without a credible response.

"Most students of Soviet society," the editorial continued, "hold this to be a vast exaggeration. They think the known Soviet instruction manuals, shelter signs and civil defense drills are modest exertions; there is no evidence that the Russians have ever practiced evacuating a city. That would require a miraculous transformation of the Soviet transport and supply networks. And it would be futile. With the twist of a few dials, as former Defense Secretary Brown once observed, America's nuclear weapons could be retargeted to blanket the evacuation sites."

The Times concluded that "the mischief in this kind of planning goes beyond the waste of money. The stability of deterrence that has kept the peace between the Soviet Union and the United States assumes that neither side could ever launch a nuclear strike without suffering an unbearable retaliatory blow. The weapons—and defenses—on each side need to be designed to preserve that condition. Despite serious uncertainties caused by some of the Soviet Union's missiles, the balance of fear persists.

"Those who aim to upset it encourage the idea that it is feasible to fight a general nuclear war and to 'survive.' That idea is not merely irresponsible; it is mad."

The Times editorial asked, "Who is the mastermind who thinks this could ever work? And who decided to propose it just as the President was trying finally to calm the public's fear of nuclear weapons? Both should be fired."

But this would be no easy matter, for the mastermind was not, as one might have suspected, Administration advisers T. K. Jones or Richard Pipes. The mastermind who insisted on the civil defense commitment, the man *The Times* called

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"mad" and said should be fired, was none other than Ronald Reagan himself.

In pushing for the program, according to two top Reagan appointees in the Office of Management and Budget whom I interviewed, President Reagan personally intervened to overrule not only his own Office of Management and Budget but Air Force Gen. David C. Jones, then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as well. Officials from O.M.B. argued that the program had been planned hastily and could end up costing $10 billion over the next five years. General Jones believed the money could be better spent on other defense items.

The new civil defense program, which in its first stage involves planning for the evacuation of the urban population to primitive anti-radiation fallout shelters in the countryside, was drawn up by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which deals with the management of natural and man-made disasters ranging from floods to nuclear war.

The agency's plan was stalled at first by O.M.B. objections and by anticipated Congressional opposition. But the agency's director, Louis Giuffrida, contacted Presidential counselor Edwin Meese 3d, who enlisted President Reagan's support. Meese and Giuffrida are old friends from the days when Meese was working for Governor Reagan and Giuffrida ran an antiterrorist school in California, teaching businessmen how to protect themselves against subversives. I do not know what Giuffrida said to Meese in their conversation, but the two O.M.B. officials to whom I talked expressed dismay when they told me of Giuffrida's effective pipeline into the White House.

Reagan responded to Meese's entreaties at a December 3, 1981, National Security Council meeting by committing his Administration to the first major increase in funding for the civil defense program in two decades. One of the participants at that meeting provided me with the details of what went on. The President spoke in favor of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's request after Meese called it an essential part of the Administration's strategic policy goals. Later Meese would tell ABC that "we must see that not only our people are protected, but the industrial base of our country could be in a position where it can be rapidly expanded, under the protection which only an adequate civil defense program can give it."

While the President backed the agency's request "in principle," the specifics were left to subsequent meetings of Administration budget committees that included Meese and O.M.B. director David A. Stockman. It was at this stage, in December 1981 and January 1982, that the critics in the O.M.B. effectively attacked the cost figures in the agency's proposals as unrealistic. In particular, the civil defense agency had not accounted for the effects of inflation in the future. Nor had the agency factored in the future costs of such key items as the real estate for blast shelters or the hardened steel and concrete underground structures that could withstand the impact of a bomb.

"They were going to put blast shelters in Manhattan," one O.M.B. critic scoffed, irritated that the FEMA people had not considered the high cost of real estate on that island, "and they just assumed that the cost of the land was insignificant."

One source deeply involved in the budget process predicted that the ultimate cost of the program "could easily go over $10 billion if they end up going for blast shelters."

For fiscal 1983, the commitment was primarily for part of the agency proposal, called Program D[1], which involves an acceleration of planning for the evacuation of American cities and towns prior to a nuclear attack. This program represented an old plan developed during the Carter years which had not been acted upon; now it was taken off the shelf because of Reagan's interest in civil defense. More costly elements, such as the construction of urban blast shelters to protect "key industrial workers" and the hardening of industrial sites to withstand nuclear explosions, were left to later budgets.

According to the agency, its evacuation program, already rejected by local governments across the country, will reduce U.S. fatalities to 20 percent—or almost 42 million people—in the event of an all-out nuclear war. As the proposal said, "Performance in a large-scale, mid-1980s attack would be on the order of 80 percent survival of the U.S. population, if the bulk of the risk-area population had been evacuated to host areas prior to attack and if fallout protection had been developed and other crisis actions taken."

The notion that this goal can be accomplished is at the heart of the difference between those in the Reagan Administration who believe that nuclear war is survivable and their critics, mostly outsiders, who think nuclear war will lead only to mutual suicide on the part of the superpowers.

Civil defense is the talisman of those who believe that nuclear war is survivable and, what's more, that its consequences can be dealt with strategically, morally and politically in the same manner as in conventional war. Men like Eugene Rostow, Paul Nitze and of course Reagan himself, who obscure the difference between conventional and nuclear war, assert that through some technological means or other, we can defend against its ravages.

These believers often compare the casualties suffered in Hiroshima to those incurred through the nonnuclear bombardments of Dresden or other cities. For example, I asked Charles Kupperman, former defense analyst for the Committee on the Present Danger who was appointed executive director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency's general advisory committee, about what kind of life we could visualize after a nuclear attack. He responded: "It means that, you know, it would be tough. It would be a struggle to reconstitute the society that we have. It certainly wouldn't be the same society [as] prior to an exchange, there is no question about that. But in terms of having an organized nation, and having enough means left after the war to reconstitute itself, I think that is entirely possible. It may take fifteen years, but geez, look how long it took Europe to recover after the Second World War."

As for the claim by T. K. Jones and others that the Russians have actively been dispersing their industry throughout the country to minimize the effects of bombing, the 1978

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C.I.A. report concluded: "Soviet measures to protect the economy could not prevent massive industrial damage. The Soviet program for dispersal of industry appears to be offset by a contrary tendency for investments in new facilities to be inside or near previously existing installations . . ."

The C.I.A. report specifically denied that Soviet civil defense measures would give the Russians the confidence to launch a first-strike attack with the hope of winning a nuclear war, as Reagan, Bush and other Administration members have argued. "They [the Russians] cannot have confidence, however, in the degree of protection their civil defenses would afford them, given the many uncertainties attendant to a nuclear exchange," the report said. "We do not believe that the Soviets' present civil defenses would embolden them deliberately to expose the USSR to a higher risk of nuclear attack." Nor did the C.I.A. feel that this uncertainty would lessen in "the foreseeable future."

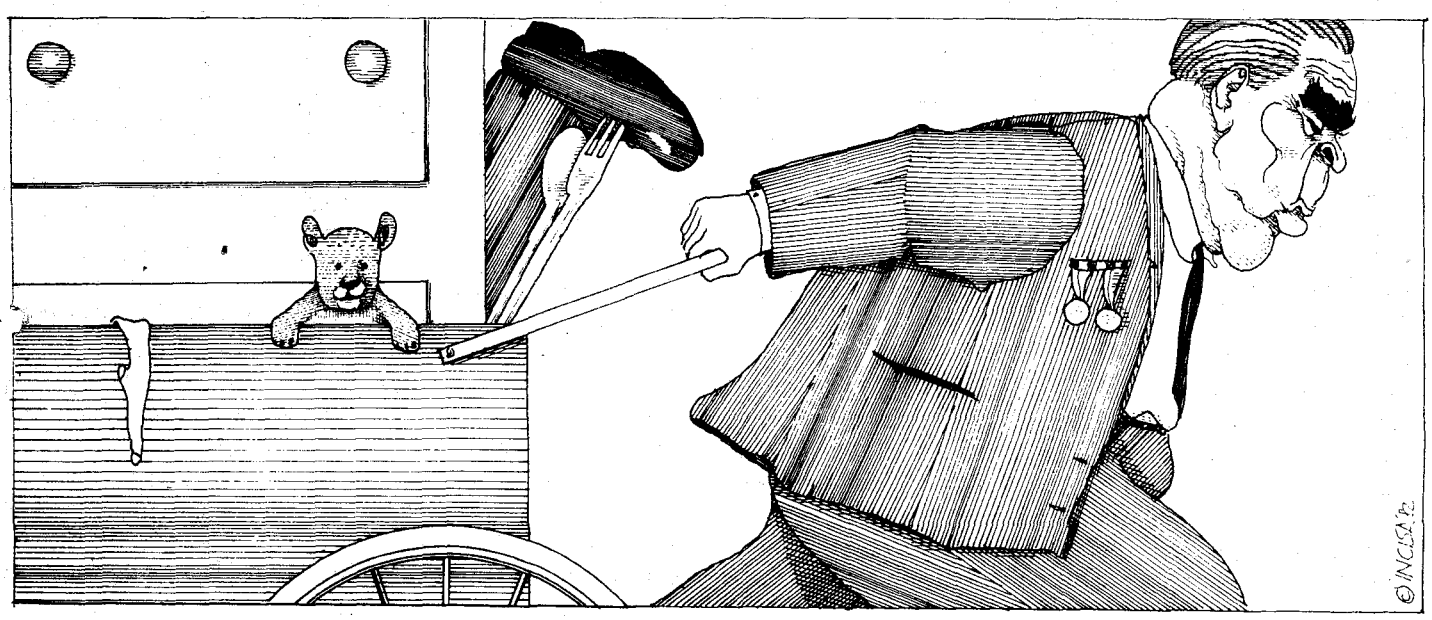
Just what would be in store for the Russians, at a minimum, was indicated in a recent report of the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London, which discounted the possibility that nuclear-war-fighting could be limited or controlled. The report's author, Desmond Ball, an authority on targeting plans, wrote that even if the United States followed its current nuclear targeting plan, which aims at military and industrial centers and attempts to spare civilians, the destruction of civilians nonetheless would be unavoidably high.

"Simply by virtue of associated industrial and military targets," Ball wrote, "all of the 200 largest Soviet cities and 80% of the 886 Soviet cities with populations above 25,000 are included in U.S. war plans. Many of these cities would receive more than 10 warheads. Approximately 60 warheads would be detonated within the Moscow city limits; peak overpressures throughout the central Moscow area would be so severe . . . that not a building or tree would remain standing." Ball noted that in addition to upward of 100 million dead and 30 million injured, such an attack would destroy 70 to 90 percent of Soviet manufacturing capacity.

Such estimates of the ravages of nuclear war, Ball warned, "are almost certainly underestimates of the actual casualties," because "estimates of the effects of nuclear war are invariably based on those variables (such as blast and fallout) that are relatively easy to calculate and generally ignore other effects that would surely take place but whose magnitude cannot be calculated." Among those effects are the fire produced by the blast, death due to lack of medical care, long-term cancer deaths and death caused by the destruction of crops and livestock. Ball estimated that when the above elements are factored in along with the synergistic effect of all this mayhem occurring at once—for example, blood damage due to radiation makes people more susceptible to blood loss and infection—the fatality figure would be double the many millions commonly cited.

Ball's assessment was supported by one former C.I.A. analyst of Soviet strategic programs. He talked about the real limits of thinking about the unthinkable. Referring to the C.I.A. studies he had conducted on civil defense and nuclear war, he said: "We've looked at the blast and primary radiation effects. What we've done is nothing like what would be required to determine what the total effect on the population would be. We have not done that study. Because I don't know how you would do it. We've thought long and hard about how we'd do it and we don't know. There are too many imponderables. It isn't a model-able thing."

He paused and confessed that "I get kind of tired of the issue after a while" because of the dreary imponderables. Then he said: "What's going to happen? They [burn victims and others] aren't going to be helped. There are going to be thousands of people that need assistance immediately, and it's not going to be available. And they're either going to die or they're going to linger on for a long time. The average level of activity in the society would be lowered significantly, to mere survival. To helping your friends and associates do what is necessary to keep on living. No one is going to be out there running lathes and rebuilding society. . . . They're going to be dying." □



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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Vaporizing Midland City

GARY GIDDINS

DEADEYE DICK. *By Kurt Vonnegut. Delacorte Press. 240 pp. $14.95.*

Last time around, in his "autobiographical collage" *Palm Sunday*, Kurt Vonnegut rated his books one against another on a scale of *A+* to *D*. This is not an acceptable form of literary criticism; all the same I'm tempted to write, "*Deadeye Dick*: *B*−," and break for lunch. The reason is simple: Vonnegut's fourteen books, of which ten are novels, are so similar in style, outlook, tone and characterization that they seem to constitute a genre. A Kurt Vonnegut, like a P.G. Wodehouse or an Alfred Hitchcock, is a fairly dependable product, entertaining, bankable and entirely sui generis. The reader who discovers him through his current offering may be as goggle-eyed with pleasure as I was after coming across *Cat's Cradle* nineteen years ago, but the reader who has followed Vonnegut's travail from the science fiction racks to the black humorists' clique to the Spokesman for Youth lectern to the mainstream may find a letter grade adequate information.

Like many of his novels, *Deadeye Dick* is a case history from the holocaust, though this time Vonnegut gives us his smallest and most painless holocaust to date. Having destroyed the world in *Cat's Cradle* and the United States in *Slapstick*, he now localizes his devastation in Midland City, Ohio—a provincial town not unlike the one in which Vonnegut was raised—which is accidentally depopulated by a neutron bomb. The narrator, Rudy Waltz, who shares Vonnegut's diction and several biographical details (including a father who built the family home and lost the family fortune), can easily identify with murderous accidents. At the age of 12, he celebrates Mother's Day by firing a rifle into the air; the bullet lands several blocks away, between the eyes of pregnant Eloise Metzger, who is vacuuming at the time. Nicknamed Deadeye Dick, Rudy becomes the town pariah and an affectless servant to his misfit parents, who have been rendered bankrupt by Mr. Metzger's lawsuits.

Yet Rudy has his moments. Like Vonnegut, he writes a terrible play—about the search for Shangri-La—that is produced in New York City. It flops there, but is more appreciated at a Midland City revival, which, not so incidentally, stars the once beautiful, now Methedrine-addicted Celia Hoover, whose husband, Dwayne, went haywire in Vonnegut's 1973 novel, *Breakfast of Champions*. What's more, Rudy ends up in better shape than the witnesses to previous Vonnegut holocausts. The novelist sentenced a guilty bystander in Nazi Germany to suicide in *Mother Night* and an innocent bystander at the firebombing of Dresden to exile in *Slaughterhouse-Five*. He gives Rudy, an accomplished cook, his own hotel in Haiti, where he lives with his much-divorced brother, Felix (formerly the president of NBC), and Hippolyte Paul De Mille, a Haitian who can raise the dead; there he whips up delicacies like banana soup and polka-dot brownies.

So here we have all the ingredients for a whimsically pessimistic meditation on the lunacies of contemporary life, with sharply focused assaults on parents who tyrannize their children, doctors who prescribe nerve-decaying drugs, expatriates who search for Shangri-La everywhere but home and a gun culture predicated on the assumption that life is cheap. Yet *Deadeye Dick* is stilted in comparison with Vonnegut's best work—*Cat's Cradle*, *Mother Night* and *Slaughterhouse-Five*. Vonnegut's voice, that dispassionate croon that pretends to misanthropy while somehow intimating affection for even the most pathetic of his characters, has soured. It's as though he's allowed his anger to bully his wit at the expense of his imagination. His final sentences have the ring of desperation and the inconsequence of a non sequitur: "You want to know something? We are still in the Dark Ages. The Dark Ages—they haven't ended yet." On one hand, Rudy Waltz's story lacks the momentum to justify so sweepingly brutal a generalization; on the other, the Dark Ages seem positively sunny compared with a world capable of imagining, let alone building, a neutron bomb.

Ray Bradbury, whose literary stock has fallen so low of late, wrote the best neutron bomb story nearly thirty years before anyone ever heard of the thing; it's called "There Will Come Soft Rains," and it describes a house that survives its occupants, although not for long. Vonnegut appears stymied by this bomb that kills people but leaves their property undamaged. In his preface, he writes that a real neutron bomb—as opposed to his "fantasy borrowed from enthusiasts for a Third World War"—would cause far more "suffering and damage than I have described." Why mute that reality? For a joke? The joke is thin. In *Cat's Cradle*, Vonnegut invented Ice-Nine, which destroyed the world by freezing all its water and freed him to play God with the comic buoyancy of a writer who has out-imagined science. The neutron bomb, however, is beyond the imagination of most humans. Vonnegut can do little more than state its existence and wryly describe an episode in which Rudy and company (including Hippolyte, who truly turns the place into a ghost town) wander through lifeless Midland City, now under martial law. Rather than animating the novel, the bomb is merely inserted—a kind of howdy-do from the world of current events.

In any case, it's no wonder that Rudy thinks of people as "undifferentiated wisps of nothingness." They aren't born and they don't die; rather, their peepholes are opened and closed. This bit of information is found on page 1, and though it may sound like an awfully cute conceit, it's actually handled well. Page 1 ends with the phrase "Blah blah blah," and I suspect that Vonnegut enjoyed imagining how his readers would tremble with the apprehension that those words—like the catch phrases "So it goes" and "Hi ho" from earlier novels—would appear every page or so. They never appear again, but there are other catch phrases, judiciously inserted, like "Imagine that" or "Think of that"; in addition, Rudy passes time by scat singing, so there are occasional "skeedy wahs" and "foodly yahs." Vonnegut is a masterly stylist, much in the way Count Basie is a masterly stylist—economic, droll, rhythmic. Consequently, many people think they have no style; but try and imitate them—it can't be done. *Deadeye Dick* has its share of well-turned phrases ("festive

Gary Giddins is a jazz critic and the author of Riding On a Blue Note *(Oxford).*

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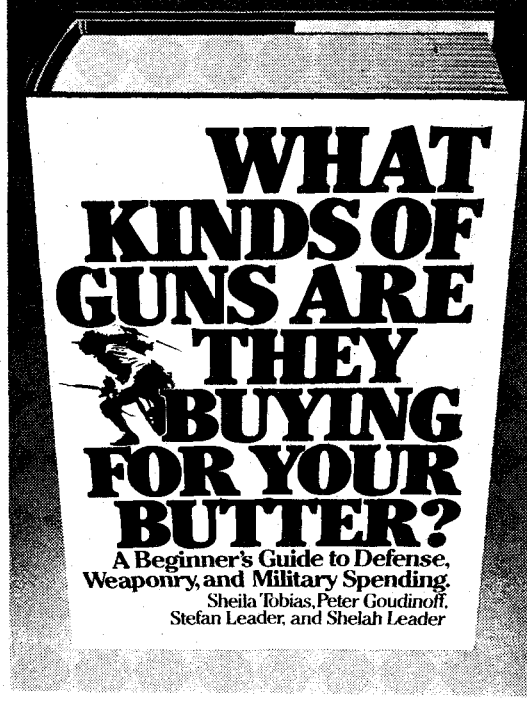
inhumanity") and jokes: "It is virtually impossible to harm a Timex watch. For some reason, the less you pay for a watch, the surer you can be that it will never stop"; "you can claim a piece of land which has been inhabited for tens of thousands of years, if only you will repeat this mantra endlessly: 'We discovered it, we discovered it, we discovered it.'" There are several amusing set pieces, notably a plane ride with the founder of the Mildred Barry Cultural Arts Center, and a few dramatically compelling playlets that make you wonder how Rudy's real play (or, for that matter, Vonnegut's real play, *Happy Birthday, Wanda June*) could have turned out so awful.

Still, some of the familiar mannerisms are intrusive and betray bad comic timing. There must be two dozen sentences that position a climactic phrase after a colon (i.e., "The words were these: Deadeye Dick"), and in almost every instance the colon strains the humor. Expected yowls fall flat, ironies fail to resonate. Rudy's father palled around with Hitler when they were both art students, but little is made of it. A couple of Italian immigrants, the Maritimo brothers, promise to be major characters, but they never come alive. Random observations—pro capital punishment, anti modern art—and unmodulated spleen, conspire to rob Vonnegut's voice of its usual disenchanted wisdom. He is frequently capricious: Celia Hoover's son is shown in her thrall on one page; on the next, he's grown into a "notorious homosexual" (whatever that is). So much for him. But then, nobody's children come to any good in *Deadeye Dick*.

Vonnegut is ambivalent about the Midwest of his youth. The little house (complete with white picket fence and all modern appliances) given to Rudy and his mother by the Maritimos is invariably described as a "shitbox," but notwithstanding its radioactive mantelpiece (which kills Mrs. Waltz before the neutron bomb has a chance to), it's the kind of shitbox many people would kill for. Reading *Deadeye Dick*, it's hard to understand what motivates Vonnegut's undying nostalgia for "the American Middle West of my youth." Yet he turns the horrific barn of a house in which Rudy grows up into the town's very own Mount Fuji. This happens when the Maritimos replace the structure's cupola, from which Rudy fired his fateful shot, with a large white cone.

"This book forces us to answer the difficult question: how much defense is enough?"
—Gloria Steinem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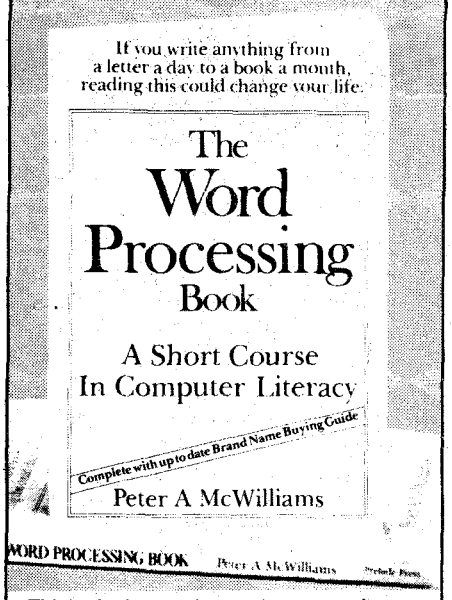

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Thus Midland City itself aspires to Shangri-La; in fact, now that the original inhabitants have been vaporized, the government is thinking of turning it into a refugee center. But nostalgic or not, Vonnegut is unlikely to join those refugees. More probably, he'll turn up in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, eating Rudy Waltz's spuma di cioccolata. And why not? The rest is "Foodly yah, foodly yah. Zang reepa dop. Faaaaaaaaaaa!" □

Touring the Past

JAMIE JAMES

THE SPECTACLE OF EMPIRE. *By Jan Morris. Doubleday and Company. 256 pp. $29.95.*

The Go-Between, L. P. Hartley's classic novel of Victorian life, begins: "The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there." Like all successful epigrams, this one is so indisputably true that it sounds a bit too good. Yet if one could look at a historical period with the open mind and the sensitivity of the professional traveler, might one not see more of the truth than does the thresher of doctrines and influences and big ideas? In *The Spectacle of Empire*, British travel writer Jan Morris turns her cool, practiced eye on the vast historical terrain of the British Empire at its apogee during the reign of Victoria, and writes about that complex tangle of cultural and geopolitical forces with the same serene objectivity she has applied to Oxford and to Fort Worth. In the prologue, Morris calls the empire an "*objet d'histoire*," likening it to a "huge work of art, resplendent and complete." The book that follows, which might be called history-as-travel, makes one of history's biggest subjects if not coherent at least apprehensible.

Extensively illustrated with period photographs and paintings, *The Spectacle of Empire* continually makes the point that imperial places, whether in Arctic wastes or in burning tropical jungles, were all the same place. Thus, rather than describing Bermuda or Madras or Tasmania, Morris evokes the Imperial Island, the Imperial Capital, the Imperial Wilderness, over all of which "the Union Jack [flew] as a guarantee of common-sense and punctual meal-times." Like the Roman Empire, the only appropriate parallel, the British Empire had an astonishing power to transform subject territories in its own image. Singapore Cathedral is *exactly* a Constable, the Governor's House in Darjeeling the very essence of Ruskin. If anything, in their perversity, these imperial monuments are even more English than their models.

Morris's reductive method, her attempt at point-of-viewlessness, goes far toward solving the great difficulty in thinking clearly about the empire: the seductive romanticism of its imagery. She understands that there is no point in trying to isolate the political and historical realities from the maudlin idealizations, and that the overwrought images, General Gordon's last stand in Khartoum, the wanderings of the saintly Dr. Livingstone, the dream empire of *The Four Feathers* and *Lives Of A Bengal Lancer* were the real empire. This held true not only for the imperialists but for the conquered peoples. It was the image of the Englishman as *Ubermensch*, so confidently peddled by himself and mostly unchallenged by the *Untermensch*, which made the empire tick. Morris writes:

> The Empire seemed immovable, inevitable, winning all its battles in the end, appearing to have no serious rivals, and bearing itself with the serenity of absolute assurance. . . . The spectacle and the style made it all seem feasible—the spectacle, by suggesting that strength untold, riches uncountable, lay behind the facade of empire, the style, by making the British always seem a more formidable people, a more *different* people, than they really were.

One of the great writers about Venice, that most spectacular of edifices, Morris expertly refracts the imperial glitter. Like any spectacle, the British Empire depended on impressive costumes, dramatic lighting and cheap tricks, presented with the effrontery of P. T. Barnum. Morris's ironic tone captures the arrogance of empire ("VIOLENT STORM IN THE ENGLISH CHANNEL, as the apocryphal *Times* headline was supposed to have said, CONTI-

Jamie James is a frequent contributor to Discover *and to the* American Book Review.

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NENT ISOLATED"), an arrogance which at times approached the whimsical absurdities of Wonderland: it is said that the site of the Canadian capital, Ottawa, was chosen by an arbitrary stab of a hatpin into Queen Victoria's map of the province.

If the virtue of history-as-travel is to demystify the romance of historical icons, then its shortcoming is that such objectivity can function only in a bloodless, superhuman dimension. While it may be instructive to think of the British Empire as a work of art, it was not one; its subjects were not curious legends but real people. Morris's attempt at point-of-viewlessness must fail. A Briton writing that most European of genres, the travel book, will necessarily be unable to appreciate the profound emotional impact of subjugation and humiliation on conquered peoples. Morris duly takes note of the brutalities of the empire ("there was much that was unforgivable to its passage across the continents"), but she treats them as peccadilloes, regrettable lapses in taste. At times, intended ironies are merely insensitive, as here: "In Australia, when hunting aborigines went out of fashion, they hunted kangaroo."

In fact, the tide that turned against the British Empire has not ebbed yet, either in England or in its former dominions, and the repercussions of the empire are still deeply felt—witness the recent conflict in the Falkland Islands. "Someone had blundered" is the signature of the empire as much as "Take up the White Man's burden,/Send forth the best ye breed." But to begin to measure the historical ramifications of the British Empire is to sink once again into the morass of its complexity. The empire is too big a subject for one book, or a shelf of books. *The Spectacle of Empire* stands as a serviceable sketch of what after all resists definitive portraiture. □

Remembering Desire

CARTER WILSON

A BOY'S OWN STORY. *By Edmund White. E. P. Dutton. 218 pp. $13.95.*

Edmund White is to be envied not only for his productivity (*A Boy's Own Story* is his fifth book in nine years) but because he is a gifted writer who has staked himself a distinguished claim in the rocky territory called desire.

The nameless hero of *A Boy's Own Story* grows up in the prosperous American 1950s with every advantage save one. Only son of a Texas millionaire, The Boy is coddled by black nannies, trained at the best private schools, whisked away each June to the toniest summer camps. "All of our daddy's dollars," he says, "were casters on which the furniture of our lives glided noiselessly."

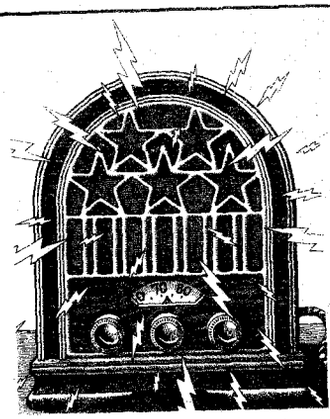
What's wrong is something money can't do much to fix. It emerges as an intuition well before The Boy reaches the age of 7. In the midst of being beaten by his father with a belt, he recognizes in the man another child, no older than himself, but different, "less appeasable—a heartless boy." Soon the child understands more: that his father doesn't love him, that his older sister is more like the son the sire wanted, that he himself is a sissy, girlish, homosexual.

But *A Boy's Own Story* is not about a child's coming out to himself. Looking back, the adult narrator can discover in The Boy no particular heterosexual desire, though he does remember a real longing to shuck the burden of being different, to *turn out* straight, which is of course an entirely separate matter.

In the sweet, contemplative flow of the book, readers may not at first realize what radical assertions about sexuality White is making. Though the psychoanalytic experts now posit that the "arrest of sexual development" (Freud's phrase) that produces homosexuality takes place before the age of 3, few have given flesh to the idea's implications for the individual.

Even those born with silver spoons in their mouths may find childhood a trying time. The wise child learns to endure injustice, practices for grown-up life by oppressing those who are smaller and weaker and, above all, waits for childhood's end. But thirty years ago, a kid like The Boy (or me), who recognized the unacceptability of something which *felt* so much like his nature, had little reason to hope time alone would raise him out of his predicament. Even today,

Carter Wilson's fourth novel is Treasures on Earth *(Knopf).*



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children who would devil themselves less if they knew of the adult gay subculture are kept ignorant of it and of the significant breakthroughs in society's attitudes toward homosexuality.

The Boy sets about manfully to become a man. But his world holds no men enough like him to serve as models. Even his desire for love sets him apart from a "real man" like his father, who accepts whatever love is given him but believes that only women actively go in search of it. The Boy seeks help: a psychiatrist pops diet pills and discusses the tangles of his own sexual life; a prep school faculty couple take him to bed for a three-way; a clergyman reminds him that homosexuality is a sin—and turns out to have been sleeping with the faculty husband all along.

What keeps *A Boy's Own Story* from being overwhelmingly sad is the presence of the man The Boy becomes. Content with himself sexually, the narrator is able to cherish and comfort The Boy, whose suffering and isolation gave him a "small, hard gland of bitter objectivity" the writer doesn't at all mind possessing. Among other things, it allows him an epicurean's slow exactness in summoning back the burning details of the few happy passionate encounters he did have as a youth.

In growing-up stories, the most difficult thing to prove is that the writer turned out O.K., because that sense must come from the writing itself. By the age of 14, The Boy has decided the style for rendering his life should be a "translation out of the crude patois of actual slow suffering . . . into the tidy couplets of brisk, beautiful sentiment." But then another possibility strikes him: "What if I could write about my life exactly as it was . . . show it in all its density and tedium and its concealed passion, never divined or expressed?"

The adult narrator of *A Boy's Own Story* remains conflicted. Often he yanks us from the middle of a painstakingly recalled moment to give the adult-embroidered version of the child's thought, as when he wonders if the bad smell his sister claimed emanated from him was really just "the terrible decaying Camembert of my heart?" This would be acceptable if the narrator were being ironic at The Boy's expense, but aside from the mildly self-mocking title with its allusion to old-fashioned kiddie pulp, the grown-up never makes fun of the child. A 7-year-old seeing that his father's eyes "no longer had that veiled, compounded look of adults who stare at blank walls or get tangled up in the tulle of thought" calls attention to the writer rather than The Boy.

In his reportorial *States of Desire*, White said the ideal reader for his fiction was a "cultivated heterosexual woman in her sixties who knows English perfectly but is not an American"—which explained the problems I had with his last novel, the tumid, Baudelairean *Nocturnes for the King of Naples*. *A Boy's Own Story* is much less arty, partly because the European woman has been replaced as muse by The Boy's American father.

"I fear we shared nothing," the narrator says, "but I like to think that music spoke to us in similar ways and acted as the source and transcript of a shared rapture." There is nothing wrong with wanting to make music in fiction—it was one of Joyce's aims—or with trying to reunite rapturously with the father through reorchestrating the past in the consciousness of the present. These are, however, motives that yield more meditation than urgent storytelling. In White's growing-up novel, the tale of the child's peregrinations in the treacherous land of desire is, finally, secondary to the "story" of the adult's

IN THE RAIN

I stare out at the sumac in the rain,
& come up with a thousand other poisons.

Why, just last night, I sorted
the bottles, the herbs that will do the trick.

Some still cling like queenly vapors.
When I press this world for healthy information

I attract childhood diseases
which won't allow me to go out & play.

The worst disease of the week is rain.
It drives home last evening's wine, & the fire

which is now lit boils the rose hips, & clears
the room of painstaking apologies. I am mad

as a trainman without his pocket watch.
Every town seems to be late to arrive.

Why, just last night the entire Atlantic
seaboard whistle-stopped through my dreams.

To love a son as if the world had just begun;
to bathe him, & change him, lead him

toward the food, that is the death of rain.
He was shelved for a second, but at this moment

he is bringing me berries from the sour tree.
I collate them, & save them in tissue. He is

the last issue of a scandalous timetable. I am
going around the bend, please send the dead flowers

to any other good friend you can think of.
If this seems unkind chalk it up to the relief

map of this neck of the woods. When we part
start again to paw through the humus. I have

buried my killer instinct there in the rain.

Terry Stokes

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struggle to bring all to mind, to integrate his various selves by coming to love them. □

THEATER.

RICHARD GILMAN

Good

"Artists," Ionesco once wrote, "have always tried to make propaganda; the great ones are those who have failed." I don't think C. P. Taylor's *Good* is a great work of imagination, but as drama it does manage to win out over its author's propagandistic or ideological impulses. At any rate, The Royal Shakespeare Company's production of this "play with music" received much praise, while causing a degree of controversy, in England, and the response has been similar here.

The controversy surrounding it has less to do with what's on stage than with what isn't. An anti-Nazi work, it nevertheless isn't anti-Nazi enough to some minds, and this dissatisfaction is doubtless aggravated by a knowledge of Taylor's political position. In a program note, Taylor (a prolific dramatist of previously minor distinction, who was born in Scotland of Jewish parents and died two months after *Good* opened in London in September 1981) wrote the following: "the writing of the play is my response to a deeply felt and deeply experienced trauma in recent history, the Third Reich's war on the Jews, as well as an intellectual awareness, not at all deeply felt, of my role as a 'Peace Criminal' in the Peace 'Crimes' of the West against the Third World—my part in the Auschwitzes we are all perpetrating today."

One needn't be a strident apologist for the West or a fanatic Zionist to see that such a statement, which implicitly equates Nazi horror and present-day "imperialism," is questionable to say the least. But I didn't see the idea at work in *Good*, at any rate not directly. What I did see was an attenuated moral drama that's pulled in several directions and manages finally to go effectively in one.

This isn't to say that Taylor's notion that we're all criminals, all guilty, doesn't inform the play. At its best and most subtle, such an idea can preclude complacency and self-righteousness, as in a book that appeared a few years after the war called *Hitler in Ourselves*, by the Swiss philosopher Max Picard. Picard argued that Hitler wasn't an aberration, a lonely freak, but the extension into monstrosity of tendencies latent in all of us. At its crassest and most dangerous, the theory of collective guilt can result in regarding Nazism as simply one outrage among others, instead of the unparalleled moral and social catastrophe it surely was. Taylor doesn't commit such an intellectual sin, but he does spread his play's moral and imaginative substance rather thin in an attempt to portray the typical Nazi as an Everyman.

Good's protagonist is a man named Halder, a novelist and a critic, obviously literate, highly "civilized" and, in a certain way until the very end, "well meaning." He tells his best friend, a Jew, that he joined the Party (the S.S., as it happens) because he thinks "if people like us join, we can push them toward rationality." But other forces are at work in him. The chief one is his not-so-secret love for the music of bands, everything from jazz combos to Bavarian oom-pah-pah groups. This penchant nurtures a strain of romanticism in him; he sees the world as tuneful, syncopated, a set of lyrics or orchestrations. As he says of the Nazi headquarters' marble halls, "they're turning everything into *The Student Prince*." Beyond that he responds to the blandishments of comradeship: they're like brothers, he says of the S.S. men soliciting him, "if they love you, you can't help loving them back."

In short, Halder is a sentimentalist. As the terror mounts during the 1930s he ducks, temporizes, rationalizes and accommodates. "I love Jews," he says at one point. "Why does there have to be a problem?" The difference, Halder says, is between "real feeling and a moral *problem*," the implication being that something might have been done to stop Hitler had people of good will *felt* something about the situation instead of perceiving it as a moral question. But when he does begin to feel something, it's much too late in historical terms and almost too late within the play's thematic progression.

Halder has been compromised beyond redemption. His literary skills have been exploited, in his being commissioned first to write a novel justifying euthanasia and then an essay on "the Jewish influence (deleterious of

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course) on modern literature." It's at this point, late in the play, that the vileness begins to reach him. Still he fights against full recognition. "I'm a happy person," he shouts and, in a scene that gives the play its title, says, "I tried to be good." Shortly afterward, when his wife tells him, "We're good people," he says, "Whatever that means." She replies, "You know what it means," and he slowly, uncertainly, nods. As the play ends, he has been sent on a mission to Auschwitz. In full S.S. regalia he stands facing the audience, describing how a band was playing as the victims were marched off to the barracks. But this time, he cries out in anguish, "the band was *real*!"

Because Halder's education, his nascent awareness, has been so slow and insubstantial, *Good* doesn't gather much momentum until midway through the second act. The staging, viewed so favorably by some, seemed to me to increase this sense of uninvolvement. The set is simply the stage of the theater, the rear brick wall exposed, pipes showing. Dozens of lights at the end of long metal rods point to the stage from several directions, giving the effect of a gigantic third degree. There is almost no scenery and very few props: a beat-up piano, some folding wooden chairs, a few music stands.

The entire cast, including a quartet of musicians, comes on stage at the opening and remains there throughout, occasionally changing parts of costumes in unobtrusive ways. The musicians play everything from "A Night in Monte Carlo" and "My Blue Heaven" to arias from *Tannhauser* and sections of a Bach oratorio. Nearly all the action takes place upstage center, while the nonparticipants in a particular scene stand watching. The effect of this fashionable staging (*Nicholas Nickleby* and *Cats* exhibit variations of the style), here by director Howard Davies, can be intrusive, drawing attention to itself much of the time. Not many new plays would benefit from a rigorous, old-fashioned, box-set, claustrophobic mounting, but I think *Good* is one.

At the center of the action is Alan Howard as Halder. A Shakespearean actor of considerable versatility, Howard performs this contemporary role in a manner you find either greatly exciting or greatly irritating. Wearing a baggy tweed suit and suspenders when not in S.S. uniform, sandy-haired and nondescript, with big rimless glasses, Howard attempts an "inner" portrait of the character. His voice ranging from shrill to booming to querulous, his face twitching in distaste, fear or sly humor, his eyes rolling from time to time, his movements rabbitlike or bold, he gives off a continuous air of febrile, almost neurotic beleaguerment. I suppose I found it more exciting than not, but the performance didn't seem quite right—in the same way that the play didn't, with its isolated moments of dramatic force, its dispersed intelligence and its hesitation about coming to grips with its quarry. □

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FILMS.

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Céleste
The Mango Tree
Amor Bandido
Monsignor

Céleste Albaret was Marcel Proust's housekeeper for the last nine years of his life. Later she wrote her memoirs, *Monsieur Proust*, and these have now been made into an entrancing movie by Percy Adlon, a young German director. *Céleste* casts a spell. It lingers on domestic furnishings and household routines with an affection that is clearly Proustian. Its atmosphere is the solicitous quiet of the sickroom, disturbed from time to time by Proust's feverish and dandified preparations for a sortie into the elegant, sometimes seamy, world of Paris—such excursions being essential to his work because, so he says, he lacks imagination. He returns from these nights of research, exhausted but exhilarated, to regale Céleste with lighthearted sketches of his companions. (Once he comes home after a different sort of rendezvous that moves her to protests of horror and pity.) Calmed somewhat by his own chatter, he then drags off to bed, not to sleep but to work.

Céleste (her husband, a chauffeur, is an amiable figure in the background) has the dual capacity for absolute repose and swift action. She can sit almost immobile for hours, sometimes through a whole night, awaiting the bell that signals her master's desire for coffee. But when he is seized with one of his terrifying asthma attacks, she moves with lifesaving speed and authority. And when an evening on the town is in prospect, she becomes an exemplary secretary and messenger, delivering invitations, ordering flowers, instructing maîtres d'hôtel. There is a glorious scene in which Proust, urging her to fly off on such errands, repeatedly calls her back to add embellishments to his already bewildering instructions. She, gay and smiling, replies, "Oui monsieur; entendu monsieur"—except, of course, the dialogue is in German.

Proust is seen here as the kindest, most appreciative and most exigent of employers. He is a man of obsessive crotchets, a gentle tyrant, and Céleste bends to his will without sacrificing her own dignity. In the later years, she becomes the guardian of his privacy and the custodian of his chaotic manuscript; at the end she is his amanuensis. Almost from the start she represents the mother for whom Proust never ceased to grieve; in time she becomes his colleague.

I don't know how accurate this relationship is as biography; in the persons of Eva Mattes and Jürgen Arndt, and under Adlon's direction, it is a deeply perceptive work of art. Mattes has been seen here in Fassbinder's *Jail Bait* and Herzog's *Stroszek*. Arndt looks a good deal like one's image of Proust and is utterly convincing as the valetudinarian novelist—"little Marcel," his brother called him—who snuggled among his hot-water bottles and wrote until dawn. *Céleste* is a touching, heartwarming film.

When they first began to appear in the United States, I remarked that Australian movies seemed innocent, shielded by distance from the shocks that had fractured our moral assumptions over the past half-century. Subsequent films from down under made me qualify that generalization, but with *The Mango Tree* we are back at Sunnybrook Farm.

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This chronicle—it is less a narrative than a series of incidents—celebrates a young man's coming of age under somewhat melodramatic but wonderfully salubrious circumstances. He is played by Christopher Pate, an actor with a face as clear and open as the Australian sky. With him are Geraldine Fitzgerald as his indomitable, not to say despotic, grandmother and Robert Helpmann as a remittance man of tender birth who, under the discipline and affection of the other two principals, forswears drink and is restored to his proper estate as a British scholar and leader of men. I never expected to meet again that gratifying standby of Victorian fiction. The young man is also fortunate in having a beautiful French teacher, who gently relieves him of his virginity in a bed so daintily elaborate that it might well have accommodated Madame de Pompadour.

Fitzgerald is Irish by birth and Helpmann is Australian, but they are both veterans of the English stage and screen, Helpmann having also been a dancer of renown. It is a mark of their professional self-control that they carry off this sentimental flapdoodle without once winking at the camera. The Australian countryside is as photogenic as the American West, and *The Mango Tree*, set in the years of World War I, is attractively provided with period costumes and quaint vehicles. Kevin Dobson directs it with the enthusiasm of a man who has just discovered that blood will tell in moments of crisis.

A movie that sustains in a viewer the single emotion of horrified pity is a grueling, almost frightening, experience. Nevertheless, I recommend Bruno Barreto's *Amor Bandido*. Barreto is a Brazilian director (*Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands*), and the rulers of Brazil have a brisk way of dealing with political complaints. Accordingly, you will find no subverting of authority in *Amor Bandido*; it is just an account, based on a real episode, of how the underclass survives in the beautiful city of Rio de Janeiro.

We come to know a number of people, all of them poor, all of them foul-mouthed, most of them noisy with the bravado of fear. Principally, we meet three: Sandra (Cristina Ache), a girl in her late teens, who has been driven from her home by her widowed father and who supports herself as a stripper in a nightclub and as a prostitute; Galvao

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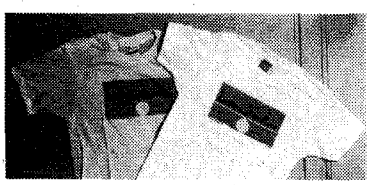

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(Paulo Gracindo), her father, a police officer who is preoccupied by the ritual murders of cab drivers, and Toninho (Paulo Guarnieri), also in his teens, a sweet-faced pimp and impassive killer, who is Sandra's lover. The two tough children revile each other; they are a fair match in verbal abuse. They also embrace with a rough passion that resembles, and often coincides with, hatred. Galvao has recently seen for himself how his daughter makes a living. It disgusts him and, he learns, has made him a figure of fun among his colleagues. He pleads with Sandra to come home; she replies by lasciviously embracing Toninho.

There is no compassion, no forgiveness in these people. The boy and girl cling to each other from a terror of loneliness; at moments they play pathetically at being sweethearts. The policeman does his job in bitter contempt for the law, taking some satisfaction from the ugliness. One senses that these three are aware of order and decency, but such concepts are remote, as far beyond their capabilities as levitation or the love of God.

You cannot call such people lost souls; they never had souls to lose. Barreto's narrative is unsparing and his cast flawless in pursuit of his intentions. The picture is as engrossing as a knife at your throat. It is a distillation of political rage.

It may seem unlikely that a movie company would buy four full pages in a Sunday edition of *The New York Times* to advertise a cinematic catastrophe, but that is how 20th Century-Fox chose to announce the arrival of *Monsignor*. I assume that this sumptuous and sleazy picture, from a novel by Jack Alain Leger, was in the works before rumors began circulating in financial circles that the Vatican's banking associates and methods were unworthy of the Mother Church. Since that is also the subject of the movie, its proprietors no doubt thought the coincidence lucky, but that is as far as their luck ran.

The tale recounts the rise to power and glory of one Father Flaherty, a young Irish-American priest who specializes in breaking the Ten Commandments. He kills and fornicates and steals, and each transgression of the laws of God and men endears him further to the princes of the Church. They love him because he seems an answer to their prayers. World War II is raging and the Vatican, cut off from its usual financial sources, is running out of cash. Flaherty, a chaplain with the U.S. armed forces who has impetuously gunned down a platoon of Germans, is brought to Rome because the holy fathers have heard that, next only to his dedication to the Almighty, he has a passion for financial deals. The Vatican's commissary is full of American goodies, especially cigarettes, since Flaherty, whose boyhood friends were the sons and daughters of Brooklyn gangsters, has ready access to the boss of the Sicilian Mafia's black market.

Someone with a mordant wit and an abiding animosity toward the Catholic Church could perhaps have made a picaresque romp of this situation. But such a mocker would not have cast Christopher Reeve in the role of devil's disciple. He is, or so he seems under the direction of Frank Perry, an actor utterly without dash, agility or impious fun. He is unacceptable as a commanding lover (with a postulant nun, who does not know he is a priest and comes to resent the deception), a bold crook or an enterprising financial manipulator. He looks most like a blankly handsome model for men's apparel, a resemblance emphasized by his frequent costume switches from tailored uniform to elegant ecclesiastical dress, the latter growing steadily in hierarchical splendor.

One might entertain the notion that the Vatican would connive with the Mafia for the greater glory of God, but no one will believe that this untoward alliance could be brought about by a department store mannequin. *Monsignor* goes in heavily for religious pomp and shots of Vatican City architecture. It surrounds Reeve with actors whose Goyaesque faces betray the worldly flesh of spiritual pretension. It is speciously anticlerical and artistically meretricious.

Genevieve Bujold plays the highly sexed postulant; Fernando Rey is the sweetly gullible Cardinal who falls for Flaherty's schemes. Abraham Polonsky and Wendell Mayes collaborated on the script. □

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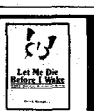

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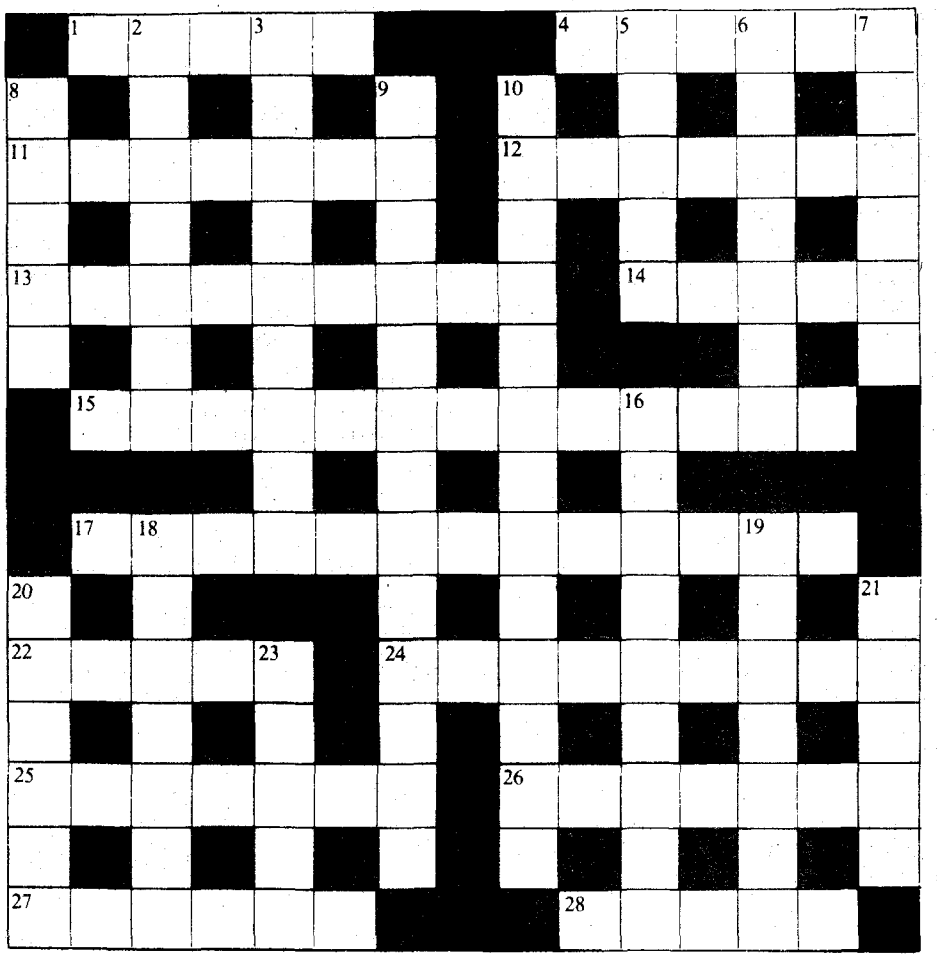
Crossword Puzzle No. 1937

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 It's rather uncertain, but you'll find a number with fever here. (5)
4 See 13
11 Part of a circle, perhaps, that gets in first with wild rides. (7)
12 Not necessarily like the eternal triangle—more like a circle. (7)
13 and 4 Important parts of the Budget Message might be such as hyperbole or litotes. (7,2,6)
14 For example, to tell tales about it would still be loyal. (5)
15 Typified by Jonah. (Prompter on his appearance, strangely enough!) (5,8)
17 In a balky manner? (13)
22 A little piece of course should be replaced! (5)
24 Only a few people can control such a thing. (9)
25 A lot of weight certain to be put on top of the priest! (7)
26 Descriptive of the domain of government? (7)
27 Wound caused by what the heavy drinker might have done. (6)
28 Such a form of grate hangs improperly. (5)

DOWN

2 The point of African warfare at one time. (7)
3 First to last, sinks—but is subjected to something. (9)
5 One has to put one's foot down to do so, and plead for it, possibly. (5)
6 Few people get up to it, and stay part of the night before. (7)
7 Shucks, that's about all one does! (6)
8 An important part of swing music, possibly associated with North Africa. (5)
9 What is bridge good for, anyway? We never agree at them! (5,8)
10 Is the ego held so, being independent? (4-9)
16 Eliza was sworn to be so at one time. (9)
18 What comes in never comes up due, without getting started. (7)
19 Places to hold things, such as keys? (7)
20 To ride poorly might call for a timely story. (6)
21 Little islands, yet so different! (5)
23 Declared to be a time of respite. (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1936

F	O	R	M	U	L	A	E	■	L	I	T	T	L	E
E	■	U	■	N	■	B	■	S	■	M	■	E	■	N
M	E	N	A	C	E	S	■	C	H	A	I	R	E	D
I	■	I	■	L	■	I	■	O	■	G	■	M	■	I
N	A	C	R	E	■	N	O	R	W	E	G	I	A	N
I	■	■	■	A	■	T	■	E	■	■	■	N	■	G
N	I	C	E	R	■	H	O	S	P	I	T	A	L	■
E	■	O	■	E	■	■	■	■	■	D	■	L	■	I
■	S	M	U	D	G	I	N	G	■	E	S	S	E	N
S	■	M	■	■	■	C	■	E	■	O	■	■	■	T
P	R	O	M	O	T	I	O	N	■	L	A	T	C	H
R	■	N	■	M	■	C	■	E	■	O	■	I	■	E
I	L	L	W	I	L	L	■	R	E	G	A	L	I	A
N	■	A	■	T	■	E	■	A	■	I	■	D	■	I
G	O	W	E	S	T	■	A	L	L	C	L	E	A	R

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